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THE

WORKS

OF

FELICIA HEMANS:

Edited by her Sister.

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WITH

AN ESSAY ON HER GENIUS:

BY

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

COMPLETE IN THREE VOLUMES.

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TALES,

AND

HISTORIC SCENES.

THE ABENCERRAGE.

Le Maure ne se venge pas parce que sa colère dure encore, mais, parce que la vengeance seule peut écarter de sa tête le poids d'infamie dont il est accablé.—Il se venge, parce qu'à ses yeux il n'y a qu'une âme basse qui puisse pardonner les affronts ; et il nourrit sa rancune, parce que s'il la sentoit s'éteindre, il croiroit avec elle avoir perdu une vertu.——*Sismondi.*

The events with which the following tale is interwoven, are related in the "Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada." They occurred in the reign of Abo Abdeli or Abdali, the last Moorish king of that city, called by the Spaniards *El Rey Chico.* The conquest of Granada, by Ferdinand and Isabella, is said, by some historians, to have been greatly facilitated by the Abencerrages, whose defection was the result of the repeated injuries they had received from the king at the instigation of the Zegris. One of the most beautiful halls of the Alhambra is still pointed out as the scene where so many of the former celebrated tribe were massacred; and it still retains their name, being called the "Sala de los Abencerrages." Many of the most interesting old Spanish ballads relate to the events of this chivalrous and romantic period.

CANTO I.

Lonely and still are now thy marble halls,
Thou fair Alhambra! there the feast is o'er;
And with the murmur of thy fountain-falls
Blend the wild notes of minstrelsy no more.

Hush'd are the voices, that, in years gone by,
Have mourn'd, exulted, menaced, through thy towers;
Within thy pillar'd courts the grass waves high,
And all uncultured bloom thy fairy bowers.

Unheeded there the flowering myrtle blows,
Through tall arcades unmark'd the sunbeam smiles,
And many a tint of soften'd brilliance throws,
O'er fretted walls, and shining peristyles.

And well might Fancy deem thy fabrics lone,
So vast, so silent, and so wildly fair,
Some charm'd abode of beings all unknown,
Powerful and viewless, children of the air.

For there no footstep treads the enchanted ground,
There not a sound the deep repose pervades,
Save winds and founts diffusing freshness round,
Through the light domes and graceful colonnades.

Far other tones have swell'd those courts along,
In days romance yet fondly loves to trace;
The clash of arms, the voice of choral song,
The revels, combats, of a vanish'd race.

And yet awhile, at Fancy's potent call,
Shall rise that race, the chivalrous, the bold!
Peopling once more each fair, forsaken hall,
With stately forms, the knights and chiefs of old.

—The sun declines—upon Nevada's height
There dwells a mellow flush of rosy light;
Each soaring pinnacle of mountain snow
Smiles in the richness of that parting glow,
And Darro's wave reflects each passing dye
That melts and mingles in th' empurpled sky.
Fragrance, exhaled from rose and citron bower,
Blends with the dewy freshness of the hour:
Hush'd are the winds, and Nature seems to sleep,
In light and stillness; wood, and tower, and steep,
Are dyed with tints of glory, only given
To the rich evening of a southern heaven;
Tints of the sun, whose bright farewell is fraught,
With all that art hath dreamt, but never caught.
—Yes, Nature sleeps; but not with her at rest
The fiery passions of the human breast.
Hark! from the Alhambra's towers what stormy sound,
Each moment deepening, wildly swells around?
Those are no tumults of a festal throng,
Not the light zambra, (1) nor the choral song;
The combat rages—'t is the shout of war,
'T is the loud clash of shield and scymetar.
Within the Hall of Lions, (2) where the rays
Of eve, yet lingering, on the fountain blaze;
There, girt and guarded by his Zegri bands,
And stern in wrath, the Moorish monarch stands,
There the strife centres—swords around him wave,
There bleed the fallen, there contend the brave,
While echoing domes return the battle-cry,
"Revenge and Freedom!—let the tyrant die!"
And onward rushing, and prevailing still,
Court, hall, and tower the fierce avengers fill.

But first and bravest of that gallant train,
Where foes are mightiest, charging ne'er in vain;
In his red hand the sabre glancing bright,
His dark eye flashing with a fiercer light,
Ardent, untired, scarce conscious that he bleeds,
His Aben-Zurrahs (3) there young Hamet leads;
While swells his voice that wild acclaim on high,
"Revenge and freedom!—let the tyrant die!"

Yes, trace the footsteps of the warrior's wrath,
By helm and corslet shatter'd in his path;
And by the thickest harvest of the slain,
And by the marble's deepest crimson stain;
Search through the serried fight, where loudest cries
From triumph, anguish, or despair arise;
And brightest where the shivering falchions glare,
And where the ground is reddest — he is there.
Yes, that young arm, amidst the Zegri host,
Hath well avenged a sire, a brother, lost.
They perish'd — not as heroes should have died,
On the red field in victory's hour of pride,
In all the glow and sunshine of their fame,
And proudly smiling as the death-pang came;
Oh! had they *thus* expired, a warrior's tear
Had flow'd almost in triumph o'er their bier.
For thus alone the brave should weep for those
Who brightly pass in glory to repose.
— Not such their fate — a tyrant's stern command
Doom'd them to fall by some ignoble hand,
As with the flower of all their high-born race,
Summon'd Abdallah's royal feast to grace,
Fearless in heart, no dream of danger nigh,
They sought the banquet's gilded hall — to die,

Betray'd, unarm'd, they fell — the fountain wave
Flow'd crimson with the life-blood of the brave,
Till far the fearful tidings of their fate
Through the wide city rung from gate to gate,
And of that lineage each surviving son
Rushed to the scene where vengeance might be won.

For this young Hamet mingles in the strife,
Leader of battle, prodigal of life,
Urging his followers, till their foes, beset,
Stand faint and breathless, but undaunted yet.
Brave Aben-Zurrahs, on! one effort more,
Yours is the triumph, and the conflict o'er.
But lo! descending o'er the darken'd hall,
The twilight shadows fast and deeply fall,
Nor yet the strife hath ceased—tho' scarce they know,
Through that thick gloom, the brother from the foe,
Till the moon rises with her cloudless ray,
The peaceful moon, and gives them light to slay.

Where lurks Abdallah?— 'midst his yielding train
They seek the guilty monarch, but in vain:
He lies not number'd with the valiant dead,
His champions round him have not vainly bled;
But when the twilight spread her shadowy veil,
And his last warriors found each effort fail,
In wild despair he fled—a trusted few,
Kindred in time, are still in danger true;
And o'er the scene of many a martial deed,
The Vega's (4) green expanse, his flying footsteps lead.
He passed the Alhambra's calm and lovely bowers,
Where slept the glistening leaves and folded flowers
In dew and starlight—there from grot and cave,
Gush'd in wild music many a sparkling wave;

There, on each breeze, the breath of fragrance rose,
And all was freshness, beauty, and repose.

But thou, dark monarch! in thy bosom reign
Storms that, once roused, shall never sleep again.
Oh! vainly bright is nature in the course
Of him who flies from terror or remorse!
A spell is round him which obscures her bloom,
And dims her skies with shadows of the tomb;
There smiles no Paradise on earth so fair,
But guilt will raise avenging phantoms there.
Abdallah heeds not though the light gale roves
Fraught with rich odour, stolen from orange-groves,
Hears not the sounds from wood and brook that rise,
Wild notes of Nature's vesper melodies;
Marks not, how lovely, on the mountain's head,
Moonlight and snow their mingling lustre spread;
But urges onward, till his weary band,
Worn with their toil, a moment's pause demand.
He stops, and turning, on Granada's fanes
In silence gazing, fix'd awhile remains,
In stern, deep silence—o'er his feverish brow,
And burning cheek, pure breezes freshly blow,
But waft in fitful murmurs from afar,
Sounds, indistinctly fearful—as of war.
What meteor bursts, with sudden blaze, on high,
O'er the blue clearness of the starry sky?
Awful it rises, like some Genie-form,
Seen 'midst the redness of the desert storm, (5)
Magnificently dread—above, below,
Spreads the wild splendour of its deepening glow.
Lo! from the Alhambra's towers the vivid glare
Streams through the still transparence of the air;

Avenging crowds have lit the mighty pyre,
Which feeds that waving pyramid of fire;
And dome and minaret, river, wood, and height,
From dim perspective start to ruddy light.

Oh Heaven! the anguish of Abdallah's soul,
The rage, though fruitless, yet beyond control!
Yet must he cease to gaze, and raving fly
For life—such life as makes it bliss to die!
On yon green height, the mosque, but half reveal'd
Through cypress-groves, a safe retreat may yield.
Thither his steps are bent—yet oft he turns,
Watching that fearful beacon as it burns.
But paler grow the sinking flames at last,
Flickering they fade, their crimson light is past.
And spiry vapours, rising o'er the scene,
Mark where the terrors of their wrath have been.
And now his feet have reach'd that lonely pile,
Where grief and terror may repose awhile;
Embower'd it stands, 'midst wood and cliff on high,
Through the grey rocks a torrent sparkling nigh;
He hails the scene where every care should cease,
And all—except the heart he brings—is peace.

There is deep stillness in those halls of state,
Where the loud cries of conflict rung so late!
Stillness like that, when fierce the Kamsin's blast
Hath o'er the dwellings of the desert pass'd. (6)
Fearful the calm—nor voice, nor step, nor breath
Disturbs that scene of beauty and of death:
Those vaulted roofs re-echo not a sound,
Save the wild gush of waters—murmuring round,
In ceaseless melodies of plaintive tone,
Through chambers peopled by the dead alone.

O'er the mosaic floors, with carnage red,
Breastplate and shield, and cloven helm are spread
In mingled fragments — glittering to the light
Of yon still moon, whose rays, yet softly bright,
Their streaming lustre tremulously shed,
And smile, in placid beauty, o'er the dead;
O'er features, where the fiery spirit's trace,
E'en death itself is powerless to efface,
O'er those who, flush'd with ardent youth, awoke,
When glowing morn in bloom and radiance broke.
Nor dreamt how near the dark and frozen sleep,
Which hears not Glory call, nor Anguish weep,
In the low silent house, the narrow spot,
Home of forgetfulness, and soon forgot.

But slowly fade the stars — the night is o'er —
Morn beams on those who hail her light no more;
Slumberers, who ne'er shall wake on earth again,
Mourners, who call'd the loved, the lost, in vain.
Yet smiles the day — Oh! not for mortal tear
Doth nature deviate from her calm career,
Nor is the earth less laughing or less fair,
Though breaking hearts her gladness may not share.
O'er the cold urn the beam of summer glows,
O'er fields of blood the zephyr freshly blows;
Bright shines the sun, though all be dark below,
And skies are cloudless o'er a world of woe,
And flowers renew'd in spring's green pathway bloom,
Alike to grace the banquet and the tomb.

Within Granada's walls the funeral rite
Attends that day of loveliness and light;
And many a chief, with dirges and with tears,
Is gather'd to the brave of other years;

And Hamet, as beneath the cypress shade
His martyr'd brother and his sire are laid,
Feels every deep resolve, and burning thought
Of ampler vengeance, e'en to passion wrought;
Yet is the hour afar — and he must brood
O'er those dark dreams awhile in solitude.
Tumult and rage are hush'd — another day
In still solemnity hath pass'd away,
In that deep slumber of exhausted wrath;
The calm that follows in the tempest's path.

And now Abdallah leaves yon peaceful fane,
His ravaged city traversing again.
No sound of gladness his approach precedes,
No splendid pageant the procession leads;
Where'er he moves the silent streets along,
Broods a stern quiet o'er the sullen throng;
No voice is heard — but in each alter'd eye,
Once brightly beaming when his steps were nigh,
And in each look of those whose love hath fled
From all on earth, to slumber with the dead,
Those, by his guilt made desolate, and thrown
On the bleak wilderness of life alone,
In youth's quick glance of scarce dissembled rage,
And the pale mien of calmly-mournful age,
May well be read a dark and fearful tale
Of thought that ill th' indignant heart can veil,
And passion, like the hush'd volcano's power,
That waits in stillness its appointed hour.

No more the clarion, from Granada's walls
Heard o'er the Vega, to the tourney calls;
No more her graceful daughters, throned on high,
Bend o'er the lists the darkly radiant eye;

Silence and gloom her palaces o'erspread,
And song is hush'd, and pageantry is fled.
—Weep, fated city! o'er thy heroes weep—
Low in the dust the sons of glory sleep;
Furl'd are their banners in the lonely hall,
Their trophied shields hang mouldering on the wall,
Wildly their chargers range the pastures o'er,
Their voice in battle shall be heard no more;
And they, who still thy tyrant's wrath survive,
Whom he hath wrong'd too deeply to forgive,
That race, of lineage high, of worth approved,
The chivalrous, the princely, the beloved;
Thine Aben-Zurrahs—they no more shall wield
In thy proud cause, the conquering lance and shield;
Condemn'd to bid the cherish'd scenes farewell
Where the loved ashes of their fathers dwell,
And far o'er foreign plains, as exiles, roam,
Their land the desert, and the grave their home.
Yet there is one shall see that race depart,
In deep, though silent, agony of heart;
One whose dark fate must be to mourn alone,
Unseen her sorrows, and their cause unknown,
And veil her heart, and teach her cheek to wear
That smile, in which the spirit hath no share;
Like the bright beams that shed their fruitless glow
O'er the cold solitude of Alpine snow.

Soft, fresh, and silent, is the midnight hour,
And the young Zayda seeks her lonely bower;
That Zegri maid within whose gentle mind
One name is deeply, secretly enshrined.
That name in vain stern reason would efface,
Hamet! 't is thine, thou foe to all her race!

And yet not hers in bitterness to prove
The sleepless pangs of unrequited love;
Pangs, which the rose of wasted youth consume,
And make the heart of all delight the tomb,
Check the free spirit in its eagle-flight,
And the spring-morn of early genius blight;
Not such her grief — though now she wakes to weep,
While tearless eyes enjoy the honey-dews of sleep. (7)

A step treads lightly through the citron shade,
Lightly, but by the rustling leaves betray'd —
Doth her young hero seek that well-known spot,
Scene of past hours that ne'er may be forgot?
'T is he — but changed that eye, whose glance of fire
Could, like a sunbeam, hope and joy inspire,
As, luminous with youth, with ardour fraught,
It spoke of glory to the inmost thought;
Thence the bright spirit's eloquence hath fled,
And in its wild expression may be read
Stern thoughts and fierce resolves — now veil'd in shade,
And now in characters of fire portray'd.
Changed e'en his voice — as thus its mournful tone
Wakes in her heart each feeling of his own.

"Zayda, my doom is fix'd — another day,
And the wrong'd exile shall be far away;
Far from the scenes where still his heart must be,
His home of youth, and, more than all, from thee.
Oh! what a cloud hath gather'd o'er my lot,
Since last we met on this fair tranquil spot!
Lovely as then, the soft and silent hour,
And not a rose hath faded from thy bower;

But I — my hopes the tempest hath o'erthrown,
And changed my heart, to all but thee alone.
Farewell, high thoughts! inspiring hopes of praise,
Heroic visions of my early days!
In me the glories of my race must end,
The exile hath no country to defend!
E'en in life's morn, my dreams of pride are o'er,
Youth's buoyant spirit wakes for me no more,
And one wild feeling in my alter'd breast
Broods darkly o'er the ruins of the rest.
Yet fear not thou — to thee, in good or ill,
The heart, so sternly tried, is faithful still!
But when my steps are distant, and my name
Thou hear'st no longer in the song of fame,
When Time steals on, in silence to efface
Of early love each pure and sacred trace,
Causing our sorrows and our hopes to seem
But as the moonlight pictures of a dream,
Still shall thy soul be with me in the truth,
And all the fervour of affection's youth?
— If such thy love, one beam of heaven shall play
In lonely beauty, o'er thy wanderer's way."

"Ask not, if such my love! oh! trust the mind
To grief so long, so silently resign'd!
Let the light spirit, ne'er by sorrow taught
The pure and lofty constancy of thought,
Its fleeting trials eager to forget,
Rise with elastic power o'er each regret!
Foster'd in tears, *our* young affection grew,
And I have learn'd to suffer and be true.
Deem not my love a frail ephemeral flower,
Nursed by soft sunshine and the balmy shower;

No! 't is the child of tempests, and defies,
And meets unchanged, the anger of the skies!
Too well I feel, with grief's prophetic heart,
That, ne'er to meet in happier days, we part.
We part! and e'en this agonizing hour,
When Love first feels his own o'erwhelming power,
Shall soon to Memory's fix'd and tearful eye
Seem almost happiness—for thou wert nigh!
Yes! when this heart in solitude shall bleed,
As days to days all wearily succeed,
When doom'd to weep in loneliness, 'twill be
Almost like rapture to have wept with thee.

"But thou, my Hamet, thou canst yet bestow
All that of joy my blighted lot can know.
Oh! be thou still the high-soul'd and the brave,
To whom my first and fondest vows I gave,
In thy proud fame's untarnish'd beauty, still
The lofty visions of my youth fulfil,
So shall it soothe me 'midst my heart's despair,
To hold undimm'd one glorious image there!"

"Zayda, my best-beloved! my words too well,
Too soon, thy bright illusions must dispel;
Yet must my soul to thee unveil'd be shown,
And all its dreams and all its passions known.
Thou shalt not be deceived—for pure as heaven
Is thy young love, in faith and fervour given.
I said my heart was changed—and would thy thought
Explore the ruin by thy kindred wrought,
In fancy trace the land whose towers and fanes,
Crush'd by the earthquake, strew its ravaged plains
And such that heart—where desolation's hand
Hath blighted all that once was fair or grand!

But Vengeance, fix'd upon her burning throne,
Sits 'midst the wreck in silence and alone,
And I, in stern devotion at her shrine,
Each softer feeling, but my love, resign.
—Yes! they whose spirits all my thoughts control,
Who hold dread converse with my thrilling soul;
They, the betray'd, the sacrificed, the brave,
Who fill a blood-stain'd and untimely grave,
Must be avenged! and pity and remorse,
In that stern cause, are banish'd from my course.
Zayda, thou tremblest—and thy gentle breast
Shrinks from the passions that destroy my rest;
Yet shall thy form, in many a stormy hour,
Pass brightly o'er my soul with softening power,
And, oft recall'd, thy voice beguile my lot,
Like some sweet lay, once heard, and ne'er forgot.

"But the night wanes—the hours too swiftly fly,
The bitter moment of farewell draws nigh:
Yet, loved one! weep not thus—in joy or pain,
Oh! trust thy Hamet, we shall meet again!
Yes, we shall meet! and haply smile at last
On all the clouds and conflicts of the past.
On that fair vision teach thy thoughts to dwell,
Nor deem these mingling tears our last farewell!"

Is the voice hush'd, whose loved, expressive tone
Thrill'd to her heart, and doth she weep alone?
Alone she weeps—that hour of parting o'er—
When shall the pang it leaves be felt no more?
The gale breathes light, and fans her bosom fair,
Showering the dewy rose-leaves o'er her hair:
But ne'er for her shall dwell reviving power,
In balmy dew, soft breeze, or fragrant flower,

To wake once more, that calm, serene delight,
The soul's young bloom, which passion's breath could
blight;
The smiling stillness of life's morning hour,
Ere yet the day-star burns in all his power.
Meanwhile through groves of deep luxuriant shade,
In the rich foliage of the south array'd,
Hamet, ere dawns the earliest blush of day,
Bends to the vale of tombs his pensive way.
Fair is that scene where palm and cypress wave,
On high o'er many an Aben-Zurrah's grave,
Lonely and fair—its fresh and glittering leaves,
With the young myrtle there the laurel weaves,
To canopy the dead—nor wanting there
Flowers to the turf, nor fragrance to the air,
Nor wood-bird's note, nor fall of plaintive stream,
Wild music, soothing to the mourner's dream.
There sleep the chiefs of old—their combats o'er,
The voice of glory thrills their hearts no more!
Unheard by them th' awakening clarion blows;
The sons of war at length in peace repose.
No martial note is in the gale that sighs,
Where proud their trophied sepulchres arise,
'Mid founts, and shades, and flowers of brightest bloom,
As, in his native vale, some shepherd's tomb.

There, where the trees their thickest foliage spread,
Dark o'er that silent valley of the dead,
Where two fair pillars rose, embower'd and lone,
Not yet with ivy clad, with moss o'ergrown,
Young Hamet kneels, while thus his vows are pour'd,
The fearful vows that consecrate his sword.
—"Spirit of him, who first within my mind
Each loftier aim, each nobler thought enshrined,

And taught my steps the line of light to trace,
Left by the glorious fathers of my race,
Hear thou my voice—for thine is with me still,
In every dream its tones my bosom thrill,
In the deep calm of midnight they are near,
'Midst busy throngs they vibrate on my ear,
Still murmuring 'vengeance!'—nor in vain the call
Few, few shall triumph in a hero's fall!
Cold as thine own to glory and to fame,
Within my heart there lives one only aim;
There, till th' oppressor for thy fate atone,
Concentring every thought, it reigns alone.
I will not weep—revenge, not grief, must be,
And blood, not tears, an offering meet for thee;
But the dark hour of stern delight shall come,
And thou shalt triumph, warrior! in thy tomb.

"Thou, too, my brother! thou art pass'd away,
Without thy fame, in life's fair dawning day:
Son of the brave! of thee no trace will shine
In the proud annals of thy lofty line,
Nor shall thy deeds be deathless in the lays
That hold communion with the after-days.
Yet by the wreaths thou might'st have nobly won
Hadst thou but lived till rose thy noontide sun,
By glory lost, I swear, by hope betray'd,
Thy fate shall amply, dearly, be repaid;
War with thy foes I deem a holy strife,
And to avenge thy death, devote my life.

"Hear ye my vows, oh spirits of the slain!
Hear and be with me on the battle-plain!
At noon, at midnight, still around me bide,
Rise on my dreams, and tell me how ye died!"

CANTO II.

——— Oh! ben provvide il Cielo,
Ch' uom per delitti mai lieto non sia.
Alfieri.

Fair land! of chivalry the old domain,
Land of the vine and olive, lovely Spain!
Though not for thee with classic shores to vie
In charms that fix the enthusiast's pensive eye,
Yet hast thou scenes of beauty richly fraught
With all that wakes the glow of lofty thought;
Fountains and vales, and rocks, whose ancient name
High deeds have raised to mingle with their fame.
Those scenes are peaceful now: the citron blows,
Wild spreads the myrtle, where the brave repose.
No sound of battle swells on Douro's shore,
And banners wave on Ebro's banks no more.
But who, unmoved, unawed, shall coldly tread
Thy fields that sepulchre the mighty dead?
Blest be that soil! where England's heroes share
The grave of chiefs, for ages slumbering there;
Whose names are glorious in romantic lays,
The wild sweet chronicles of elder days,
By goatherd lone, and rude serrana sung,
Thy cypress dells and vine-clad rocks among.
How oft those rocks have echo'd to the tale
Of knights who fell in Roncesvalles' vale;
Of him, renown'd in old heroic lore,
First of the brave, the gallant Campeador;

Of those, the famed in song, who proudly died,
When "Rio Verde" roll'd a crimson tide:
Or that high name, by Garcilaso's might,
On the green Vega won in single fight. (8)

Round fair Granada, deepening from afar,
O'er that green Vega rose the din of war.
At morn or eve no more the sunbeams shone
O'er a calm scene in pastoral beauty lone;
On helm and corslet tremulous they glanced,
On shield and spear in quivering lustre danced.
Far as the sight by clear Xenil could rove,
Tents rose around, and banners glanced above,
And steeds in gorgeous trappings, armour bright
With gold reflecting every tint of light,
And many a floating plume, and blazon'd shield,
Diffused romantic splendour o'er the field.

There swell those sounds that bid the life-blood start
Swift to the mantling cheek, and beating heart.
The clang of echoing steel, the charger's neigh,
The measured tread of hosts in war's array;
And oh! that music, whose exulting breath
Speaks but of glory on the road to death;
In whose wild voice there dwells inspiring power
To wake the stormy joy of danger's hour,
To nerve the arm, the spirit to sustain,
Rouse from despondence, and support in pain,
And, 'midst the deepening tumults of the strife,
Teach every pulse to thrill with more than life.

High o'er the camp, in many a broider'd fold,
Floats to the wind a standard rich with gold:
There imaged on the cross, *his* form appears,
Who drank for man the bitter cup of tears. (9)

His form, whose word recall'd the spirit, fled,
Now borne by hosts to guide them o'er the dead!
O'er yon fair walls to plant the cross on high,
Spain hath sent forth her flower of chivalry.
Fired with that ardour, which, in days of yore,
To Syrian plains the bold crusaders bore;
Elate with lofty hope, with martial zeal,
They come, the gallant children of Castile;
The proud, the calmly dignified:—and there
Ebro's dark sons with haughty mien repair,
And those who guide the fiery steed of war
From yon rich province of the western star. (10)

But thou, conspicuous 'midst the glittering scene,
Stern grandeur stamp'd upon thy princely mien;
Known by the foreign garb, the silvery vest,
The snow-white charger, and the azure crest, (11)
Young Aben-Zurrah! 'midst that host of foes,
Why shines *thy* helm, thy Moorish lance? Disclose!
Why rise the tents where dwell thy kindred train,
Oh son of Afric, 'midst the sons of Spain?
Hast thou with these thy nation's fall conspired,
Apostate chief! by hope of vengeance fired?
How art thou changed! Still first in every fight,
Hamet, the Moor! Castile's devoted knight!
There dwells a fiery lustre in thine eye,
But not the light that shone in days gone by;
There is wild ardour in thy look and tone,
But not the soul's expression once thine own,
Nor aught like peace within. Yet who shall say
What secret thoughts thine inmost heart may sway?
No eye but Heaven's may pierce that curtain'd breast,
Whose joys and griefs alike are unexprest.

There hath been combat on the tented plain;
The Vega's turf is red with many a stain,
And rent and trampled, banner, crest, and shield,
Tell of a fierce and well-contested field;
But all is peaceful now—the west is bright
With the rich splendour of departing light;
Mulhacen's peak, half lost amidst the sky,
Glows like a purple evening-cloud on high,
And tints, that mock the pencil's art, o'erspread
Th' eternal snow that crowns Veleta's head, (12)
While the warm sunset o'er the landscape throws
A solemn beauty, and a deep repose.
Closed are the toils and tumults of the day,
And Hamet wanders from the camp away,
In silent musings rapt:—the slaughter'd brave
Lie thickly strewn by Darro's rippling wave.
Soft fall the dews—but other drops have dyed
The scented shrubs that fringe the river-side,
Beneath whose shade, as ebbing life retired,
The wounded sought a shelter—and expired. (13)
Lonely, and lost in thoughts of other days,
By the bright windings of the stream he strays,
Till, more remote from battle's ravaged scene,
All is repose, and solitude serene.
There, 'neath an olive's ancient shade reclined,
Whose rustling foliage waves in evening's wind,
The harass'd warrior, yielding to the power,
The mild, sweet influence of the tranquil hour,
Feels, by degrees, a long-forgotten calm
Shed o'er his troubled soul unwonted balm;
His wrongs, his woes, his dark and dubious lot,
The past, the future, are awhile forgot;
And Hope, scarce own'd, yet stealing o'er his breast,
Half dares to whisper, "Thou shalt yet be blest!"

Such his vague musings—but a plaintive sound
Breaks on the deep and solemn stillness round;
A low half-stifled moan, that seems to rise
From life and death's contending agonies.
He turns: Who shares with him that lonely shade?
—A youthful warrior on his death-bed laid,
All rent and stain'd his broider'd Moorish vest,
The corslet shatter'd on his bleeding breast!
In his cold hand the broken falchion strain'd,
With life's last force convulsively retain'd;
His plumage soil'd with dust, with crimson dyed,
And the red lance, in fragments, by his side;
He lies forsaken—pillow'd on his shield,
His helmet raised, his lineaments reveal'd.
Pale is that quivering lip, and vanish'd now
The light once throned on that commanding brow
And o'er that fading eye, still upward cast,
The shades of death are gathering dark and fast.
Yet, as yon rising moon her light serene
Sheds the pale olive's waving boughs between,
Too well can Hamet's conscious heart retrace,
Though changed thus fearfully that pallid face,
Whose every feature to his soul conveys
Some bitter thought of long-departed days.

"Oh! is it thus," he cries, "we meet at last?
Friend of my soul, in years for ever past!
Hath fate but led me hither to behold
The last dread struggle ere that heart is cold,
Receive thy latest agonizing breath,
And, with vain pity, soothe the pangs of death?
Yet let me bear thee hence—while life remains,
E'en though thus feebly circling through thy veins

Some healing balm thy sense may still revive,
Hope is not lost,—and Osmyn yet may live!
And blest were he, whose timely care should save
A heart so noble, e'en from glory's grave."

Roused by those accents, from his lowly bed
The dying warrior faintly lifts his head;
O'er Hamet's mien, with vague, uncertain gaze,
His doubtful glance awhile bewilder'd strays;
Till, by degrees, a smile of proud disdain
Lights up those features late convulsed with pain;
A quivering radiance flashes from his eye,
That seems too pure, too full of soul, to die;
And the mind's grandeur in its parting hour
Looks from that brow with more than wonted power.

"Away!" he cries, in accents of command,
And proudly waves his cold and trembling hand,
"Apostate, hence! my soul shall soon be free,
E'en now it soars, disdaining aid from thee:
'T is not for thee to close the fading eyes
Of him who faithful to his country dies;
Not for *thy* hand to raise the drooping head
Of him who sinks to rest on glory's bed.
Soon shall these pangs be closed, this conflict o'er,
And worlds be mine where thou canst never soar;
Be thine existence with a blighted name,
Mine the bright death which seals a warrior's fame!"

The glow hath vanish'd from his cheek—his eye
Hath lost that beam of parting energy;
Frozen and fix'd it seems—his brow is chill;
One struggle more,—that noble heart is still.
Departed warrior! were thy mortal throes,
Were thy last pangs, ere nature found repose,

More keen, more bitter, than the envenom'd dart
Thy dying words have left in Hamet's heart!
Thy pangs were transient; *his* shall sleep no more
Till life's delirious dream itself is o'er;
But thou shalt rest in glory, and thy grave
Be the pure altar of the patriot brave.
Oh, what a change that little hour hath wrought
In the high spirit and unbending thought!
Yet, from himself each keen regret to hide,
Still Hamet struggles with indignant pride;
While his soul rises gathering all its force,
To meet the fearful conflict with remorse.

To thee, at length, whose artless love hath been
His own, unchanged, through many a stormy scene;
Zayda! to thee his heart for refuge flies;
Thou still art faithful to affection's ties.
Yes! let the world upbraid, let foes contemn,
Thy gentle breast the tide will firmly stem;
And soon thy smile, and soft consoling voice,
Shall bid his troubled soul again rejoice.

Within Granada's walls are hearts and hands,
Whose aid in secret Hamet yet commands;
Nor hard the task at some propitious hour,
To win his silent way to Zayda's bower,
When night and peace are brooding o'er the world,
When mute the clarions, and the banners furl'd.
That hour is come—and o'er the arms he bears
A wandering fakir's garb the chieftain wears;
Disguise that ill from piercing eye could hide
The lofty port, and glance of martial pride;
But night befriends—through paths obscure he pass'd,
And hail'd the lone and lovely scene at last;

Young Zayda's chosen haunt, the fair alcove,
The sparkling fountain, and the orange-grove;
Calm in the moonlight smiles the still retreat,
As form'd alone for happy hearts to meet.
For happy hearts?—not such is hers, who there
Bends o'er her lute, with dark, unbraided hair;
That maid of Zegri race, whose eye, whose mien,
Tell that despair her bosom's guest hath been.
So lost in thought she seems, the warrior's feet
Unheard approach her solitary seat,
Till his known accents every sense restore—
"My own loved Zayda! do we meet once more?"

She starts, she turns—the lightning of surprise,
Of sudden rapture, flashes from her eyes:
But that is fleeting—it is past—and now
Far other meaning darkens o'er her brow;
Changed is her aspect, and her tone severe—
"Hence, Aben-Zurrah! death surrounds thee here!"

"Zayda! what means that glance, unlike thine own?
What mean those words, and that unwonted tone?
I will not deem thee changed—but in thy face,
It is not joy, it is not love, I trace!
It was not thus in other days we met:
Hath time, hath absence taught thee to forget?
Oh! speak once more—these rising doubts dispel,
One smile of tenderness, and all is well!"

"Not thus we met in other days!—oh no!
Thou wert not, warrior, then thy country's foe!
Those days are past—we ne'er shall meet again
With hearts all warmth, all confidence, as then.
But *thy* dark soul no gentler feelings sway,
Leader of hostile bands! away! away!

On in thy path of triumph and of power,
Nor pause to raise from earth a blighted flower."

"And *thou* too changed! thine early vow forgot!
This, this alone, was wanting to my lot!
Exiled and scorn'd, of every tie bereft,
Thy love, the desert's lonely fount, was left;
And thou, my soul's last hope, its lingering beam,
Thou, the good angel of each brighter dream,
Wert all the barrenness of life possess'd,
To wake one soft affection in my breast!
That vision ended—fate hath naught in store,
Of joy or sorrow, e'er to touch me more.
Go, Zegri maid! to scenes of sunshine fly,
From the stern pupil of adversity!
And now to hope, to confidence adieu!
If thou art faithless, who shall e'er be true?"

"Hamet! oh wrong me not!—I too could speak
Of sorrows—trace them on my faded cheek,
In the sunk eye, and in the wasted form,
That tell the heart hath nursed a canker-worm!
But words are idle—read my sufferings there,
Where grief is stamp'd on all that once was fair.

"Oh, wert thou still what once I fondly deem'd,
All that thy mien express'd, thy spirit seem'd,
My love had been devotion—till in death
Thy name had trembled on my latest breath.
But not the chief who leads a lawless band,
To crush the altars of his native land;
Th' apostate son of heroes, whose disgrace
Hath stain'd the trophies of a glorious race;
Not *him* I loved—but one whose youthful name
Was pure and radiant in unsullied fame.

Hadst thou but died, ere yet dishonour's cloud
O'er that young name had gather'd as a shroud,
I then had mourn'd thee proudly—and my grief
In its own loftiness had found relief;
A noble sorrow, cherish'd to the last,
When every meaner woe had long been past.
Yes! let Affection weep—no common tear
She sheds, when bending o'er a hero's bier.
Let Nature mourn the dead—a grief like this,
To pangs that rend *my* bosom had been bliss!"

"High-minded maid! the time admits not now
To plead my cause, to vindicate my vow,
That vow, too dread, too solemn to recall,
Hath urged me onward, haply to my fall.
Yet this believe—no meaner aim inspires
My soul, no dream of poor ambition fires.
No! every hope of power, of triumph, fled,
Behold me but th' avenger of the dead!
One whose changed heart no tie, no kindred knows,
And in thy love alone hath sought repose.
Zayda, wilt thou his stern accuser be?
False to his country, he is true to thee!
Oh, hear me yet!—if Hamet e'er was dear,
By our first vows, our young affection, hear!
Soon must this fair and royal city fall,
Soon shall the cross be planted on her wall!
Then who can tell what tides of blood may flow,
While her fanes echo to the shrieks of woe?
Fly, fly with me, and let me bear thee far
From horrors thronging in the path of war:
Fly! and repose in safety—till the blast
Hath made a desert in its course—and past."

"Thou that wilt triumph when the hour is come,
Hasten'd by thee, to seal thy country's doom,
With *thee* from scenes of death shall Zayda fly
To peace and safety?—Woman too can die!
And die exulting, though unknown to fame,
In all the stainless beauty of her name!
Be mine unmurmuring, undismay'd to share
The fate my kindred and my sire must bear.
And deem not thou my feeble heart shall fail,
When the clouds gather, and the blasts assail;
Thou hast but known me ere the trying hour
Call'd into life my spirit's latent power;
But I have energies that idly slept,
While withering o'er my silent woes I wept,
And now, when hope and happiness are fled,
My soul is firm—for what remains to dread?
Who shall have power to suffer and to bear,
If strength and courage dwell not with Despair?

"Hamet, farewell! retrace thy path again,
To join thy brethren on the tented plain.
There wave and wood, in mingled murmurs, tell,
How, in far other cause, thy fathers fell!
Yes! on that soil hath glory's footstep been,
Names unforgotten consecrate the scene.
Dwell not the souls of heroes round thee there,
Whose voices call thee in the whispering air?
Unheard, in vain, they call—their fallen son
Hath stain'd the name those mighty spirits won,
And to the hatred of the brave and free
Bequeath'd his own, through ages yet to be!"

Still as she spoke, th' enthusiast's kindling eye
Was lighted up with inborn majesty,

While her fair form and youthful features caught
All the proud grandeur of heroic thought,
Severely beauteous! (14) awe-struck and amazed,
In silent trance awhile the warrior gazed
As on some lofty vision—for she seem'd
One all inspired—each look with glory beam'd,
While brightly bursting through its cloud of woes,
Her soul at once in all its light arose.
Oh! ne'er had Hamet deem'd there dwelt enshrined,
In form so fragile, that unconquer'd mind,
And fix'd, as by some high enchantment, there
He stood—till wonder yielded to despair.

"The dream is vanish'd—daughter of my foes!
Reft of each hope, the lonely wanderer goes.
Thy words have pierced his soul—yet deem thou not
Thou couldst be once adored, and e'er forgot!
O form'd for happier love! heroic maid!
In grief sublime, in danger undismay'd.
Farewell, and be thou blest!—all words were vain
For him who ne'er may view that form again;
Him whose sole thought, resembling bliss, must be
He *hath* been loved, once fondly loved, by thee!"

And is the warrior gone?—doth Zayda hear
His parting footstep, and without a tear?
Thou weep'st not, lofty maid!—yet who can tell
What secret pangs within thy heart may dwell?
They feel not least, the firm, the high in soul,
Who best each feeling's agony control.
Yes! we may judge the measure of the grief
Which finds in Misery's eloquence relief;
But who shall pierce those depths of silent woe,
Whence breathes no language, whence no tears may flow?

The pangs that many a noble breast hath proved,
Scorning itself that thus it *could* be moved?
He, He alone, the inmost heart who knows,
Views all its weakness, pities all its throes,
He who hath mercy when mankind contemn,
Beholding anguish—all unknown to them.

Fair city! thou, that 'midst thy stately fanes,
And gilded minarets, lowering o'er the plains,
In eastern grandeur proudly dost arise
Beneath thy canopy of deep-blue skies,
While streams that bear thee treasures in their wave, (15)
Thy citron-groves and myrtle-gardens lave;
Mourn! for thy doom is fix'd—the days of fear
Of chains, of wrath, of bitterness, are near!
Within, around thee are the trophied graves
Of kings and chiefs—their children shall be slaves.
Fair are thy halls, thy domes majestic swell,
But there a race that rear'd them shall not dwell;
For 'midst thy counsels Discord still presides,
Degenerate fear thy wavering monarch guides,
Last of a line whose regal spirit flown
Hath to their offspring but bequeath'd a throne,
Without one generous thought, or feeling high,
To teach his soul how kings should live and die.

A voice resounds within Granada's wall,
The hearts of warriors echo to its call. (16)
Whose are those tones with power electric fraught,
To reach the source of pure, exalted thought?

See on a fortress-tower, with beckoning hand,
A form, majestic as a prophet, stand!

His mien is all impassion'd—and his eye
Fill'd with a light whose fountain is on high;
Wild on the gale his silvery tresses flow,
And inspiration beams upon his brow,
While, thronging round him, breathless thousands gaze,
As on some mighty seer of elder days.

"Saw ye the banners of Castile display'd,
The helmets glittering, and the line array'd?
Heard ye the march of steel-clad hosts?" he cries,
"Children of conquerors! in your strength arise!
O high-born tribes! oh names unstain'd by fear!
Azarques, Zegris, Almoradis, hear! (17)
Be every feud forgotten, and your hands
Dyed with no blood but that of hostile bands. (18)
Wake, princes of the land! the hour is come,
And the red sabre must decide your doom.
Where is that spirit which prevail'd of yore,
When Tarik's bands o'erspread the western shore? (19)
When the long combat raged on Xeres' plain, (20)
And Afric's tecbir swell'd through yielding Spain? (21)
Is the lance broken, is the shield decay'd,
The warrior's arm unstrung, his heart dismay'd?
Shall no high spirit of ascendant worth
Arise to lead the sons of Islam forth?
To guard the regions where our fathers' blood
Hath bathed each plain, and mingled with each flood,
Where long their dust hath blended with the soil
Won by their swords, made fertile by their toil?

"O ye sierras of eternal snow!
Ye streams that by the tombs of heroes flow,
Woods, fountains, rocks, of Spain! ye saw their might
In many a fierce and unforgotten fight!

Shall ye behold their lost, degenerate race,
Dwell 'midst your scenes in fetters and disgrace?
With each memorial of the past around,
Each mighty monument of days renown'd?
May this indignant heart ere then be cold,
This frame be gather'd to its kindred mould!
And the last life-drop circling through my veins
Have tinged a soil untainted yet by chains!

"And yet one struggle ere our doom is seal'd,
One mighty effort, one deciding field!
If vain each hope, we still have choice to be,
In life the fetter'd, or in death the free!"

Still while he speaks, each gallant heart beats high,
And ardour flashes from each kindling eye;
Youth, manhood, age, as if inspired, have caught
The glow of lofty hope and daring thought,
And all is hush'd around—as every sense
Dwelt on the tones of that wild eloquence.

But when his voice hath ceased, th' impetuous cry
Of eager thousands burst at once on high;
Rampart, and rock, and fortress, ring around,
And fair Alhambra's inmost halls resound:
"Lead us, O chieftain! lead us to the strife,
To fame in death, or liberty in life!"
O zeal of noble hearts! in vain display'd!
High feeling wasted! generous hope betray'd!
Now, while the burning spirit of the brave
Is roused to energies that yet might save,
E'en now, enthusiasts! while ye rush to claim
Your glorious trial on the field of fame,

Your king hath yielded! Valour's dream is o'er;(22)
Power, wealth, and freedom, are your own no more;
And for your children's portion, but remains
That bitter heritage—the stranger's chains.

CANTO III.

Fermossi al fin il cor che balzò tanto.
Ippolito Pindemonte.

Heroes of elder days! untaught to yield,
Who bled for Spain on many an ancient field,
Ye, that around the oaken cross of yore (23)
Stood firm and fearless on Asturia's shore,
And with your spirit, ne'er to be subdued,
Hallow'd the wild Cantabrian solitude;
Rejoice amidst your dwellings of repose,
In the last chastening of your Moslem foes!
Rejoice!—for Spain, arising in her strength,
Hath burst the remnant of their yoke at length;
And they in turn the cup of woe must drain,
And bathe their fetters with their tears in vain.
And thou, the warrior *born in happy hour*, (24)
Valencia's lord, whose name alone is power,
Theme of a thousand songs in days gone by,
Conqueror of Kings! exult, O Cid! on high.
For still 't was thine to guard thy country's weal,
In life, in death, the watcher for Castile!

Thou, in that hour when Mauritania's bands
Rush'd from their palmy groves and burning lands,

E'en in the realm of spirits didst retain
A patriot's vigilance, remembering Spain! (25)
Then, at deep midnight, rose the mighty sound,
By Leon heard, in shuddering awe profound,
As through her echoing streets in dread array,
Beings, once mortal, held their viewless way;
Voices from worlds we know not—and the tread
Of marching hosts, the armies of the dead,
Thou and thy buried chieftains—from the grave
Then did thy summons rouse a king to save,
And join thy warriors with unearthly might
To aid the rescue in Tolosa's fight.
Those days are past—the crescent on thy shore,
O realm of evening! sets, to rise no more. (26)
What banner streams afar from Vela's tower? (27)
The cross, bright ensign of Iberia's power!
What the glad shout of each exulting voice?
"Castile and Arragon! rejoice, rejoice!"
Yielding free entrance to victorious foes,
The Moorish city sees her gates unclose,
And Spain's proud host, with pennon, shield, and lance
Through her long streets in knightly garb advance.

Oh! ne'er in lofty dreams hath Fancy's eye
Dwelt on a scene of statelier pageantry,
At joust or tourney, theme of poet's lore,
High masque, or solemn festival of yore.
The gilded cupolas, that proudly rise
O'erarch'd by cloudless and cerulean skies,
Tall minarets, shining mosques, barbaric towers,
Fountains, and palaces, and cypress bowers;
And they, the splendid and triumphant throng,
With helmets glittering as they move along,

With broider'd scarf, and gem-bestudded mail,
And graceful plumage streaming on the gale;
Shields gold-emboss'd, and pennons floating far,
And all the gorgeous blazonry of war,
All brighten'd by the rich transparent hues
That southern suns o'er heaven and earth diffuse;
Blend in one scene of glory, form'd to throw
O'er memory's page a never-fading glow.
And there too, foremost 'midst the conquering brave,
Your azure plumes, O Aben-Zurrahs! wave.
There Hamet moves; the chief whose lofty port
Seems nor approach to shun, nor praise to court,
Calm, stern, collected—yet within his breast
Is there no pang, no struggle unconfest?
If such there be, it still must dwell unseen,
Nor cloud a triumph with a sufferer's mien.

Hear'st thou the solemn, yet exulting sound
Of the deep anthem floating far around?
The choral voices to the skies that raise
The full majestic harmony of praise?
Lo! where, surrounded by their princely train,
They come, the sovereigns of rejoicing Spain,
Borne on their trophied car—lo! bursting thence
A blaze of chivalrous magnificence!

Onward their slow and stately course they bend
To where th' Alhambra's ancient towers ascend,
Rear'd and adorn'd by Moorish kings of yore,
Whose lost descendants there shall dwell no more.

They reach those towers—irregularly vast
And rude they seem, in mould barbaric cast: (28)

They enter—to their wondering sight is given
A genii palace—an Arabian heaven! (29)
A scene by magic raised, so strange, so fair,
Its forms and colours seem alike of air.
Here by sweet orange-boughs, half shaded o'er,
The deep clear bath reveals its marble floor,
Its margin fringed with flowers, whose glowing hues
The calm transparence of its wave suffuse.
There, round the court, where Moorish arches bend,
Aërial columns, richly deck'd, ascend;
Unlike the models of each classic race,
Of Doric grandeur, or Corinthian grace,
But answering well each vision that portrays
Arabian splendour to the poet's gaze:
Wild, wondrous, brilliant, all—a mingling glow
Of rainbow tints, above, around, below;
Bright-streaming from the many-tinctured veins
Of precious marble—and the vivid stains
Of rich mosaics o'er the light arcade,
In gay festoons and fairy knots display'd.

On through th' enchanted realm, that only seems
Meet for the radiant creatures of our dreams,
The royal conquerors pass—while still their sight
On some new wonder dwells with fresh delight.
Here the eye roves through slender colonnades,
O'er bowery terraces and myrtle shades,
Dark olive-woods beyond, and far on high
The vast sierra, mingling with the sky.
There, scattering far around their diamond spray,
Clear streams from founts of alabaster play,
Through pillar'd halls, where, exquisitely wrought,
Rich arabesques, with glittering foliage fraught,

Surmount each fretted arch, and lend the scene
A wild, romantic, oriental mien:
While many a verse from eastern bards of old,
Borders the wall in characters of gold. (30)
Here Moslem luxury, in her own domain,
Hath held for ages her voluptuous reign
'Midst gorgeous domes, where soon shall silence brood,
And all be lone—a splendid solitude.
Now wake their echoes to a thousand songs,
From mingling voices of exulting throngs;
Tambour, and flute, and atabal, are there, (31)
And joyous clarions pealing on the air,
While every hall resounds, "Granada won!
Granada! for Castile and Arragon!" (32)

'Tis night—from dome and tower, in dazzling maze,
The festal lamps innumerably blaze; (33)
Through long arcades their quivering lustre gleams,
From every lattice tremulously streams,
'Midst orange-gardens plays on fount and rill,
And gilds the waves of Darro and Xenil;
Red flame the torches on each minaret's height,
And shines each street an avenue of light;
And midnight feasts are held, and music's voice
Through the long night still summons to rejoice.

Yet there, while all would seem to heedless eye
One blaze of pomp, one burst of revelry,
Are hearts unsoothed by those delusive hours,
Gall'd by the chain, though deck'd awhile with flowers;
Stern passions working in th' indignant breast,
Deep pangs untold, high feelings unexprest,

Heroic spirits, unsubmitting yet,
Vengeance, and keen remorse, and vain regret.

From yon proud height, whose olive-shaded brow
Commands the wide luxuriant plains below,
Who lingering gazes o'er the lovely scene,
Anguish and shame contending in his mien?
He, who, of heroes and of kings the son,
Hath lived to lose whate'er his fathers won,
Whose doubts and fears his people's fate have seal'd,
Wavering alike in council and in field;
Weak, timid ruler of the wise and brave,
Still a fierce tyrant or a yielding slave.

Far from these vine-clad hills and azure skies,
To Afric's wilds the royal exile flies, (34)
Yet pauses on his way, to weep in vain,
O'er all he never must behold again.
Fair spreads the scene around—for him *too* fair,
Each glowing charm but deepens his despair.
The Vega's meads, the city's glittering spires,
The old majestic palace of his sires,
The gay pavilions, and retired alcoves,
Bosom'd in citron and pomegranate groves;
Tower-crested rocks, and streams that wind in light,
All in one moment bursting on his sight,
Speak to his soul of glory's vanish'd years,
And wake the source of unavailing tears.
—Weep'st thou, Abdallah!—Thou dost well to weep,
O feeble heart! o'er all thou couldst not keep!
Well do a woman's tears befit the eye
Of him who knew not, as a man, to die. (35)

The gale sighs mournfully through Zayda's bower,
The hand is gone that nursed each infant flower.

No voice, no step, is in her father's halls,
Mute are the echoes of their marble walls;
No stranger enters at the chieftain's gate,
But all is hush'd, and void, and desolate.

There, through each tower and solitary shade,
In vain doth Hamet seek the Zegri maid;
Her grove is silent, her pavilion lone,
Her lute forsaken, and her doom unknown;
And through the scene she loved, unheeded flows
The stream whose music lull'd her to repose.

But oh! to him whose self-accusing thought
Whispers 't was *he* that desolation wrought;
He who his country and his faith betray'd,
And lent Castile revengeful, powerful aid;
A voice of sorrow swells in every gale,
Each wave, low rippling, tells a mournful tale;
And as the shrubs, untended, unconfined,
In wild exuberance rustle to the wind,
Each leaf hath language to his startled sense,
And seems to murmur—"Thou hast driven her hence!"
And well he feels to trace her flight were vain,
—Where hath lost love been once recall'd again?
In her pure breast, so long by anguish torn,
His name can rouse no feeling now but scorn.
O bitter hour! when first the shuddering heart
Wakes to behold the void within—and start!
To feel its own abandonment, and brood
O'er the chill bosom's depth of solitude.
The stormy passions that in Hamet's breast
Have sway'd so long, so fiercely, are at rest!

Th' avenger's task is closed: (36)—he finds too late
It hath not changed his feelings, but his fate.
His was a lofty spirit, turn'd aside
From its bright path by woes, and wrongs, and pride,
And onward, in its new tumultuous course,
Borne with too rapid and intense a force
To pause one moment in the dread career,
And ask—if such could be its native sphere.
Now are those days of wild delirium o'er,
Their fears and hopes excite his soul no more;
The feverish energies of passion close,
And his heart sinks in desolate repose,
Turns sickening from the world, yet shrinks not less
From its own deep and utter loneliness.

There is a sound of voices on the air,
A flash of armour in the sunbeam's glare,
'Midst the wild Alpuxarras; (37)—there, on high,
Where mountain-snows are mingling with the sky,
A few brave tribes, with spirit yet unbroke,
Have fled indignant from the Spaniard's yoke.

O ye dread scenes, where Nature dwells alone,
Severely glorious on her craggy throne;
Ye citadels of rock, gigantic forms,
Veil'd by the mists, and girdled by the storms;
Ravines, and glens, and deep-resounding caves,
That hold communion with the torrent-waves;
And ye, the unstain'd and everlasting snows,
That dwell above in bright and still repose;
To you, in every clime, in every age,
Far from the tyrant's or the conqueror's rage,
Hath Freedom led her sons: untired to keep
Her fearless vigils on the barren steep.

She, like the mountain eagle, still delights
To gaze exulting from unconquer'd heights,
And build her eyrie in defiance proud,
To dare the wind and mingle with the cloud.

Now her deep voice, the soul's awakener, swells,
Wild Alpuxarras, through your inmost dells.
There, the dark glens and lonely rocks among,
As at the clarion's call, her children throng.
She with enduring strength hath nerved each frame,
And made each heart the temple of her flame,
Her own resistless spirit, which shall glow
Unquenchably, surviving all below.

There high-born maids, that moved upon the earth,
More like bright creatures of aërial birth,
Nurslings of palaces, have fled to share
The fate of brothers and of sires; to bear
All undismay'd, privation and distress,
And smile, the roses of the wilderness.
And mothers with their infants, there to dwell
In the deep forest or the cavern cell,
And rear their offspring 'midst the rocks, to be
If now no more the mighty, still the free.

And 'midst that band of veterans, o'er whose head
Sorrows and years their mingled snow have shed:
They saw thy glory, they have wept thy fall,
O royal city! and the wreck of all
They loved and hallow'd most:—doth aught remain
For these to prove of happiness or pain?
Life's cup is drain'd—earth fades before their eye;
Their task is closing—they have but to die.
Ask ye, why fled they hither?—that their doom
Might be to sink unfetter'd to the tomb.

And youth, in all its pride of strength, is there;
And buoyancy of spirit, form'd to dare
And suffer all things,—fallen on evil days,
Yet darting o'er the world an ardent gaze,
As on th' arena, where its powers may find
Full scope to strive for glory with mankind.

Such are the tenants of the mountain-hold,
The high in heart, unconquer'd, uncontroll'd;
By day the huntsmen of the wild—by night,
Unwearied guardians of the watch-fire's light.
They from their bleak, majestic home have caught
A sterner tone of unsubmitting thought,
While all around them bids the soul arise,
To blend with Nature's dread sublimities.
—But these are lofty dreams, and must not be
Where tyranny is near:—the bended knee,
The eye, whose glance no inborn grandeur fires,
And the tamed heart, are tributes she requires;
Nor must the dwellers of the rock look down
On regal conquerors and defy their frown.
What warrior-band is toiling to explore
The mountain-pass, with pine-wood shadow'd o'er?
Startling with martial sound each rude recess,
Where the deep echo slept in loneliness.
These are the sons of Spain!—Your foes are near:
Oh, exiles of the wild sierra! hear!
Hear! wake! arise! and from your inmost caves,
Pour like the torrent in its might of waves!

Who leads th' invaders on?—his features bear
The deep-worn traces of a calm despair;
Yet his dark brow is haughty—and his eye
Speaks of a soul that asks not sympathy.

'T is he! 't is he again! the apostate chief;
He comes in all the sternness of his grief.
He comes, but changed in heart, no more to wield
Falchion for proud Castile in battle-field,
Against his country's children — though he leads
Castilian bands again to hostile deeds:
His hope is but from ceaseless pangs to fly,
To rush upon the Moslem spears and die.
So shall remorse and love the heart release,
Which dares not dream of joy, but sighs for peace.

The mountain-echoes are awake — a sound
Of strife is ringing through the rocks around.
Within the steep defile that winds between
Cliffs piled on cliffs, a dark, terrific scene,
There Moorish exile and Castilian knight
Are wildly mingling in the serried fight.
Red flows the foaming streamlet of the glen,
Whose bright transparence ne'er was stain'd till then;
While swell the war-note and the clash of spears,
To the bleak dwellings of the mountaineers,
Where thy sad daughters, lost Granada! wait
In dread suspense, the tidings of their fate.
But he — whose spirit panting for its rest,
Would fain each sword concentrate in his breast —
Who, where a spear is pointed, or a lance
Aim'd at another's breast, would still advance —
Courts death in vain; each weapon glances by,
As if for him 't were bliss too great to die.
Yes! Aben-Zurrah! there are deeper woes
Reserved for thee, ere Nature's last repose;
Thou know'st not yet what vengeance fate can wreak,
Nor all the heart can suffer ere it break.

Doubtful and long the strife, and bravely fell
The sons of battle in that narrow dell;
Youth in its light of beauty there hath past,
And age, the weary, found repose at last;
Till few and faint the Moslem tribes recoil,
Borne down by numbers and o'erpower'd by toil,
Dispersed, dishearten'd through the pass they fly,
Pierce the deep wood, or mount the cliff on high;
While Hamet's band in wonder gaze, nor dare
Track o'er their dizzy path the footsteps of despair.

Yet he to whom each danger hath become
A dark delight, and every wild a home,
Still urges onward—undismay'd to tread
Where life's fond lovers would recoil with dread;
But fear is for the happy—*they* may shrink
From the steep precipice, or torrent's brink;
They to whom earth is paradise—their doom
Lends no stern courage to approach the tomb;
Not such his lot, who, school'd by fate severe,
Were but too bless'd if aught remain'd to fear. (38)
Up the rude crags, whose giant masses throw
Eternal shadows o'er the glen below;
And by the fall whose many-tinctured spray
Half in a mist of radiance veils its way,
He holds his venturous track:—supported now
By some o'erhanging pine or ilex bough;
Now by some jutting stone that seems to dwell
Half in mid-air, as balanced by a spell:
Now hath his footstep gain'd the summit's head,
A level span, with emerald verdure spread,
A fairy circle—there the heath-flowers rise,
And the rock-rose unnoticed blooms and dies;

And brightly plays the stream, ere yet its tide
In foam and thunder cleave the mountain side;
But all is wild beyond—and Hamet's eye
Roves o'er a world of rude sublimity.
That dell beneath, where e'en by noon of day
Earth's charter'd guest, the sunbeam, scarce can stray;
Around, untrodden woods; and far above,
Where mortal footstep ne'er may hope to rove,
Bare granite cliffs, whose fix'd, inherent dyes
Rival the tints that float o'er summer skies; (39)
And the pure glittering snow-realm, yet more high,
That seems a part of heaven's eternity.

There is no track of man where Hamet stands,
Pathless the scene as Libya's desert sands;
Yet on the calm, still air, a sound is heard
Of distant voices, and the gathering-word
Of Islam's tribes, now faint and fainter grown,
Now but the lingering echo of a tone.

That sound, whose cadence dies upon his ear,
He follows, reckless if his bands are near.
On by the rushing stream his way he bends,
And through the mountain's forest zone ascends;
Piercing the still and solitary shades
Of ancient pines, and dark, luxuriant glades,
Eternal twilight's reign:—those mazes past,
The glowing sunbeams meet his eyes at last,
And the lone wanderer now hath reach'd the source
Whence the wave gushes, foaming on its course.
But there he pauses—for the lonely scene
Towers in such dread magnificence of mien,
And, mingled oft with some wild eagle's cry,
From rock-built eyrie rushing to the sky,

So deep the solemn and majestic sound
Of forests, and of waters murmuring round,
That, rapt in wondering awe, his heart forgets
Its fleeting struggles, and its vain regrets.
—What earthly feeling unabash'd can dwell
In Nature's mighty presence?—'midst the swell
Of everlasting hills, the roar of floods,
And frown of rocks, and pomp of waving woods?
These their own grandeur on the soul impress,
And bid each passion feel its nothingness.

'Midst the vast marble cliffs, a lofty cave
Rears its broad arch beside the rushing wave;
Shadow'd by giant oaks, and rude, and lone,
It seems the temple of some power unknown,
Where earthly being may not dare intrude
To pierce the secrets of the solitude.
Yet thence at intervals a voice of wail
Is rising, wild and solemn, on the gale.
Did thy heart thrill, O Hamet, at the tone?
Came it not o'er thee as a spirit's moan?
As some loved sound that long from earth had fled,
The unforgotten accents of the dead?
E'en thus it rose—and springing from his trance,
His eager footsteps to the sound advance.
He mounts the cliffs, he gains the cavern floor;
Its dark green moss with blood is sprinkled o'er:
He rushes on—and lo! where Zayda rends
Her locks, as o'er her slaughter'd sire she bends,
Lost in despair;—yet as a step draws nigh,
Disturbing sorrow's lonely sanctity,
She lifts her head, and, all subdued by grief,
Views, with a wild, sad smile, the once-loved chief;

While rove her thoughts, unconscious of the past,
And every woe forgetting—but the last.

"Com'st thou to weep with me?—for I am left
Alone on earth, of every tie bereft.
Low lies the warrior on his blood-stain'd bier;
His child may call, but he no more shall hear!
He sleeps—but never shall those eyes unclose;
'T was not my voice that lull'd him to repose,
Nor can it break his slumbers.—Dost thou mourn?
And is thy heart, like mine, with anguish torn?
Weep, and my soul a joy in grief shall know,
That o'er his grave my tears with Hamet's flow!"

But scarce her voice had breathed that well-known name,
When, swiftly rushing o'er her spirit, came
Each dark remembrance; by affliction's power
Awhile effaced in that o'erwhelming hour,
To wake with tenfold strength;—'t was then her eye
Resumed its light, her mien its majesty,
And o'er her wasted cheek a burning glow
Spreads, while her lips indignant accents flow.

"Away! I dream—oh, how hath sorrow's might
Bow'd down my soul, and quench'd its native light,
That I should thus forget, and bid *thy* tear
With mine be mingled o'er a father's bier!
Did he not perish, haply by thy hand,
In the last combat with thy ruthless band?
The morn behold that conflict of despair:—
'T was then he fell—he fell!—and thou wert there!
Thou! who thy country's children hast pursued
To their last refuge 'midst these mountains rude.

Was it for this I loved thee?—Thou hast taught
My soul all grief, all bitterness of thought!
'T will soon be past—I bow to Heaven's decree,
Which bade each pang be minister'd by thee."

"I had not deem'd that aught remain'd below
For me to prove of yet untasted woe;
But thus to meet thee, Zayda! can impart
One more, one keener agony of heart.
Oh, hear me yet!—I would have died to save
My foe, but still thy father, from the grave;
But in the fierce confusion of the strife,
In my own stern despair and scorn of life,
Borne wildly on, I saw not, knew not aught,
Save that to perish there in vain I sought.
And let me share thy sorrows—hadst thou known
All I have felt in silence and alone,
E'en *thou* might'st then relent, and deem at last
A grief like mine might expiate all the past.

"But oh! for thee, the loved and precious flower
So fondly rear'd in luxury's guarded bower,
From every danger, every storm secured,
How hast *thou* suffer'd! what hast thou endured,
Daughter of palaces! and can it be
That this bleak desert is a home for thee?
These rocks *thy* dwelling! thou, who shouldst have known
Of life the sunbeam and the smile alone!
Oh, yet forgive!—be all my guilt forgot,
Nor bid me leave thee to so rude a lot!"

"That lot is fix'd; 't were fruitless to repine,
Still must a gulf divide my fate from thine.

I may forgive—but not at will the heart
Can bid its dark remembrances depart.
No, Hamet, no!—too deeply these are traced,
Yet the hour comes when all shall be effaced!
Not long on earth, not long, shall Zayda keep
Her lonely vigils o'er the grave to weep:
E'en now, prophetic of my early doom,
Speaks to my soul a presage of the tomb;
And ne'er in vain did hopeless mourner feel
That deep foreboding o'er the bosom steal!
Soon shall I slumber calmly by the side
Of him for whom I lived and would have died:
Till then, one thought shall soothe my orphan lot,
In pain and peril—I forsook him not.

"And now, farewell!—behold the summer-day
Is passing, like the dreams of life, away.
Soon will the tribe of him who sleeps draw nigh,
With the last rites his bier to sanctify.
Oh, yet in time, away!—'t were not *my* prayer
Could move their hearts a foe like thee to spare!
This hour they come—and dost thou scorn to fly?
Save me that one last pang—to see thee die!"

E'en while she speaks is heard their echoing tread;
Onward they move, the kindred of the dead.
They reach the cave—they enter—slow their pace,
And calm, deep sadness marks each mourner's face,
And all is hush'd—till he who seems to wait
In silent, stern devotedness, his fate,
Hath met their glance—then grief to fury turns;
Each mien is changed, each eye indignant burns,
And voices rise, and swords have left their sheath:
Blood must atone for blood, and death for death!

They close around him:—lofty still his mien,
His cheek unalter'd, and his brow serene.
Unheard, or heard in vain, is Zayda's cry;
Fruitless her prayer, unmark'd her agony.
But as his foremost foes their weapons bend
Against the life he seeks not to defend,
Wildly she darts between—each feeling past,
Save strong affection, which prevails at last.
Oh! not in vain its daring—for the blow
Aim'd at his heart hath made her life-blood flow;
And she hath sunk a martyr on the breast,
Where, in that hour, her head may calmly rest,
For he is saved:—behold the Zegri band,
Pale with dismay and grief, around her stand;
While, every thought of hate and vengeance o'er,
They weep for her who soon shall weep no more.
She, she alone is calm:—a fading smile,
Like sunset, passes o'er her cheek the while;
And in her eye, ere yet it closes, dwell
Those last faint rays, the parting soul's farewell.

"Now is the conflict past, and I have proved
How well, how deeply thou hast been beloved!
Yes, in an hour like this 't were vain to hide
The heart so long and so severely tried:
Still to thy name that heart hath fondly thrill'd,
But sterner duties call'd—and were fulfill'd:
And I am blest!—To every holier tie
My life was faithful,—and for thee I die!
Nor shall the love so purified be vain;
Sever'd on earth, we yet shall meet again.
Farewell!—And ye, at Zayda's dying prayer,
Spare him, my kindred tribe! forgive and spare!

Oh! be his guilt forgotten in his woes,
While I, beside my sire, in peace repose."

Now fades her cheek, her voice hath sunk, and death
Sits in her eye, and struggles in her breath.
One pang—'t is past—her task on earth is done,
And the pure spirit to its rest hath flown.
But he for whom she died—Oh! who may paint
The grief, to which all other woes were faint?
There is no power in language to impart
The deeper pangs, th' ordeals of the heart,
By the dread Searcher of the soul survey'd;
These have no words—nor are by words portray'd.

A dirge is rising on the mountain-air,
Whose fitful swells its plaintive murmurs bear
Far o'er the Alpuxarras;—wild its tone,
And rocks and caverns echo "Thou art gone!"

"Daughter of heroes! thou art gone
To share his tomb who gave thee birth;
Peace to the lovely spirit flown!
It was not form'd for earth.
Thou wert a sunbeam in thy race,
Which brightly past, and left no trace.

"But calmly sleep!—for thou art free,
And hands unchain'd thy tomb shall raise.
Sleep! they are closed at length for thee,
Life's few and evil days.
Nor shalt thou watch, with tearful eye,
The lingering death of liberty.

"Flower of the desert! thou thy bloom
Didst early to the storm resign:

We bear it still—and dark their doom
Who cannot weep for thine!
For us, whose every hope is fled,
The time is past to mourn the dead.

"The days have been, when o'er thy bier
Far other strains than these had flow'd;
Now, as a home from grief and fear,
We hail thy dark abode!
We who but linger to bequeath
Our sons the choice of chains or death.

"Thou art with those, the free, the brave,
The mighty of departed years;
And for the slumberers of the grave
Our fate hath left no tears.
Though loved and lost, to weep were vain
For thee, who ne'er shalt weep again.

"Have we not seen, despoil'd by foes,
The land our fathers won of yore?
And is there yet a pang for those
Who gaze on *this* no more?
Oh, that like them 't were ours to rest!
Daughter of heroes! thou art blest!"

A few short years, and in the lonely cave
Where sleeps the Zegri maid, is Hamet's grave.
Sever'd in life, united in the tomb—
Such of the hearts that loved so well, the doom!
Their dirge, of woods and waves th' eternal moan;
Their sepulchre, the pine-clad rocks alone.
And oft beside the midnight watch-fire's blaze,
Amidst those rocks, in long-departed days

(When Freedom fled, to hold, sequester'd there,
The stern and lofty councils of despair),
Some exiled Moor, a warrior of the wild,
Who the lone hours with mournful strains beguiled,
Hath taught his mountain-home the tale of those
Who thus have suffer'd, and who thus repose.

NOTES.

Note 1.

Not the light zambra.

Zambra, a Moorish dance.

Note 2.

Within the hall of Lions.

The hall of Lions was the principal one of the Alhambra, and was so called from twelve sculptured lions, which supported an alabaster basin in the centre.

Note 3.

His Aben-Zurrahs there young Hamet leads.

Aben-Zurrahs; the name thus written is taken from the translation of an Arabic manuscript given in the third volume of Bourgoanne's Travels through Spain.

Note 4.

The Vega's green expanse.

The Vega, the plain surrounding Granada, the scene of frequent actions between the Moors and Christians.

Note 5.

Seen 'midst the redness of the desert storm.

An extreme redness in the sky is the presage of the Simoom. —See *Bruce's Travels.*

Note 6.

Stillness like that, when fierce the Kamsin's blast
Hath o'er the dwellings of the desert pass'd.

Of the Kamsin, a hot south wind, common in Egypt, we have the following account in Volney's Travels: "These winds are known in Egypt by the general name of the winds of fifty days, because they prevail more frequently in the fifty days preceding and following the equinox. They are mentioned by travellers under the name of the poisonous winds, or hot winds of the desert: their heat is so excessive, that it is difficult to form any idea of its violence without having experienced it. When they begin to blow, the sky, at other times so clear in this climate, becomes dark and heavy; the sun loses his splendour, and appears of a violet colour; the air is not cloudy, but grey and thick, and is filled with a subtile dust, which penetrates everywhere: respiration becomes short and difficult, the skin parched and dry, the lungs are contracted and painful, and the body consumed with internal heat. In vain is coolness sought for; marble, iron, water, though the sun no longer appears, are hot: the streets are deserted, and a dead silence appears everywhere. The natives of towns and villages shut themselves up in their houses, and those of the desert in tents, or holes dug in the earth, where they wait the termination of this heat, which generally lasts three days. Woe to the traveller whom it surprises remote from shelter: he must suffer all its dreadful effects, which are sometimes mortal."

Note 7.

While tearless eyes enjoy the honey-dews of sleep.

"Enjoy the honey-heavy-dew of slumber."—*Shakspeare.*

Note 8.

On the green Vega won in single fight.

Garcilaso de la Vega derived his surname from a single combat (in which he was the victor) with a Moor, on the Vega of Granada.

Note 9.

Who drank for man the bitter cup of tears.

"El Rey D. Fernando bolvió á la Vega, y pusó su Real á la vista de Huecar, a veynte y seys dias del mes de Abril, adonde fué fortificado de todo lo necesario; poniendo el Christiano toda su gente en esquadron, con todas sus vanderas tendidas, y su Real Estandarte, el qual llevava por divisa un Christo crucificado."—*Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada.*

Note 10.

From yon rich province of the western star.

Andalusia signifies, in Arabic, *the region of the evening* or *of the west;* in a word, the *Hesperia* of the Greeks.—See *Casiri. Bibliot. Arabico-Hispana, Gibbon's Decline and Fall,* &c.

Note 11.

The snow-white charger, and the azure crest.

"Los Abencerrages salieron con su acostumbrada librea azul y blanca, todos llenos de ricos texidos de plata, las plumas de la misma color; en sus adargas, su acostumbrada divisa, salvages que desquixalavan leones, y otros un mundo que lo deshazia un selvage con un baston."—*Guerras Civiles de Granada.*

Note 12.

Th' eternal snow that crowns Veleta's head.

The loftiest heights of the Sierra Nevada are those called Mulhacen and Picacho de Veleta.

Note 13.

The wounded sought a shelter—and expired.

It is known to be a frequent occurrence in battle, that the dying and the wounded drag themselves, as it were mechanically, to the shelter which may be afforded by any bush or thicket on the field.

Note 14.

Severely beauteous.

"Severe in youthful beauty."—*Milton.*

Note 15.

While streams, that bear thee treasures in their wave.

Granada stands upon two hills, separated by the Darro. The Genil runs under the walls. The Darro is said to carry with its stream small particles of gold, and the Genil, of silver. When Charles V. came to Granada with the Empress Isabella, the city presented him with a crown, made of gold which had been collected from the Darro.—See *Bourgoanne's and other Travels.*

Note 16.

The hearts of warriors echo to its call.

"At this period, while the inhabitants of Granada were sunk in indolence, one of those men, whose natural and impassioned eloquence has sometimes aroused a people to deeds of heroism, raised his voice, in the midst of the city, and awakened the inhabitants from their lethargy. Twenty thousand enthusiasts, ranged under his banners, were prepared to sally forth, with the fury of desperation, to attack the besiegers, when Abo Abdeli, more afraid of his subjects than of the enemy, resolved immediately to capitulate, and made terms with the Christians, by which it was agreed that the Moors should be allowed the free exercise of their religion and laws; should be permitted, if they thought proper, to depart unmolested with their effects to Africa; and that he himself, if he remained in Spain, should retain an extensive estate, with houses and slaves, or be granted an equivalent in money if he preferred retiring to Barbary."—See *Jacob's Travels in Spain.*

Note 17.

Azarques, Zegris, Almoradis, hear!

Azarques, Zegris, Almoradis, different tribes of the Moors of Granada, all of high distinction.

Note 18.

Dyed with no blood but that of hostile bands.

The conquest of Granada was greatly facilitated by the civil dissensions which, at this period, prevailed in the city. Several of the Moorish tribes, influenced by private feuds, were fully pre-

pared for submission to the Spaniards; others had embraced the cause of Muley el Zagal, the uncle and competitor for the throne of Abdallah (or Abo Abdeli), and all was jealousy and animosity.

Note 19.

When Tarik's bands o'erspread the western shore.

Tarik, the first leader of the Arabs and Moors into Spain.—"The Saracens landed at the pillar or point of Europe: the corrupt and familiar appellation of Gibraltar (Gebel al Tarik) describes the mountain of Tarik, and the intrenchments of his camp were the first outline of those fortifications, which, in the hands of our countrymen, have resisted the art and power of the House of Bourbon. The adjacent governors informed the court of Toledo of the descent and progress of the Arabs; and the defeat of his lieutenant, Edeco, who had been commanded to seize and bind the presumptuous strangers, first admonished Roderic of the magnitude of the danger. At the royal summons, the dukes and counts, the bishops and nobles of the Gothic monarchy, assembled at the head of their followers; and the title of king of the Romans, which is employed by an Arabic historian, may be excused by the close affinity of language, religion, and manners, between the nations of Spain."—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, &c. vol. ix. pp. 472, 473.

Note 20.

When the long combat raged on Xeres' plain.

"In the neighbourhood of Cadiz, the town of Xeres has been illustrated by the encounter which determined the fate of the kingdom; the stream of the Guadelete, which falls into the bay, divided the two camps, and marked the advancing and retreating skirmishes of three successive days. On the fourth day, the two armies joined a more serious and decisive issue." "Notwithstanding the valour of the Saracens, they fainted under the weight of multitudes, and the plain of Xeres was overspread with sixteen thousand of their dead bodies.—'My brethren,' said Tarik to his surviving companions, 'the enemy is before you, the sea is behind; whither would ye fly? Follow your general; I am resolved either to lose my life, or to trample on the prostrate king of the Romans.'

Besides the resource of despair, he confided in the secret correspondence and nocturnal interviews of count Julian with the sons and the brother of Witiza. The two princes, and the archbishop of Toledo, occupied the most important post: their well-timed defection broke the ranks of the Christians; each warrior was prompted by fear or suspicion to consult his personal safety; and the remains of the Gothic army were scattered or destroyed in the flight and pursuit of the three following days."—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, &c. vol. ix. pp. 473, 474.

Note 21.

And Afric's tecbir swell'd through yielding Spain.

The *tecbir*, the shout of onset used by the Saracens in battle.

Note 22.

Your king hath yielded! Valour's dream is o'er.

The terrors occasioned by this sudden excitement of popular feeling seem even to have accelerated Abo Abdeli's capitulation. "Aterrado Abo Abdeli con el alboroto, y temiendo no ser ya el Dueno de un pueblo amotinado, se apresuró á concluir una capitulacion, la menos dura que podia obtener en tan urgentes circunstancias, y ofreció entregar á Granada el dia seis de Enero."—*Paseos en Granada*, vol. i. p. 298.

Note 23.

Ye, that around the oaken cross of yore.

The oaken cross, carried by Pelagius in battle.

Note 24.

And thou, the warrior born in happy hour.

See Southey's Chronicle of the Cid, in which that warrior is frequently styled, "*he who was born in happy hour.*"

Note 25.

E'en in the realm of spirits didst retain
A patriot's vigilance, remembering Spain.

"Moreover, when the Miramamolin brought over from Africa, against King Don Alfonso, the eighth of that name, the mightiest

power of the misbelievers that had ever been brought against Spain, since the destruction of the kings of the Goths, the Cid Campeador remembered his country in that great danger; for the night before the battle was fought at the Navas de Tolosa, in the dead of the night, a mighty sound was heard in the whole city of Leon, as if it were the tramp of a great army passing through; and it passed on to the royal monastery of St. Isidro, and there was a great knocking at the gate thereof, and they called to a priest who was keeping vigils in the church, and told him, that the captains of the army whom he heard were the Cid Ruydiez, and Count Ferran Gonzalez, and that they came there to call up King Don Ferrando the Great, who lay buried in that church, that he might go with them to deliver Spain. And on the morrow that great battle of the Navas de Tolosa was fought, wherein sixty thousand of the misbelievers were slain, which was one of the greatest and noblest battles ever won over the Moors."—*Southey's Chronicle of the Cid.*

Note 26.

O realm of evening!

The name of Andalusia, the *region of evening* or *of the west*, was applied by the Arabs, not only to the province so called, but to the whole peninsula.

Note 27.

What banner streams afar from Vela's tower?

"En este dia, para siempre memorable, los estandartes de la Cruz, de St. Iago, y de los Reyes de Castilla se tremoláron sobre la torre mas alta, llamada de *la Vela;* y un exercito prosternado, inundandose en lagrimas de gozo y reconocimiento, asistió al mas glorioso de los espectaculos."—*Paseos en Granada*, vol. i. p. 599

Note 28.

They reach those towers—irregularly vast
And rude they seem, in mould barbaric cast.

Swinburne, after describing the noble palace built by Charles V. in the precincts of the Alhambra, thus proceeds: "Adjoining (to the north) stands a huge heap of as ugly buildings as can well be

seen, all huddled together, seemingly without the least intention of forming *one* habitation out of them. The walls are entirely unornamented, all gravel and pebbles, daubed over with plaster by a very coarse hand; yet this is the palace of the Moorish kings of Granada, indisputably the most curious place within that exists in Spain, perhaps in Europe. In many countries you may see excellent modern as well as ancient architecture, both entire and in ruins; but nothing to be met with anywhere else can convey an idea of this edifice, except you take it from the decorations of an opera, or the tales of the genii.—*Swinburne's Travels through Spain.*

Note 29.

A genii palace—an Arabian heaven.

"Passing round the corner of the emperor's palace, you are admitted at a plain unornamented door, in a corner. On my first visit, I confess, I was struck with amazement as I stept over the threshold, to find myself on a sudden transported into a species of fairy land. The first place you come to is the court called the Communa, or *del Mesucar*, that is, the common baths: an oblong square, with a deep basin of clear water in the middle; two flights of marble steps leading down to the bottom; on each side a parterre of flowers, and a row of orange-trees. Round the court runs a peristyle paved with marble; the arches bear upon very slight pillars, in proportions and style different from all the regular orders of architecture. The ceilings and walls are incrustated with fretwork in stucco, so minute and intricate, that the most patient draughtsman would find it difficult to follow it, unless he made himself master of the general plan."—*Swinburne's Travels in Spain.*

Note 30.

Borders the walls in characters of gold.

The walls and cornices of the Alhambra are covered with inscriptions in Arabic characters. "In examining this abode of magnificence," says Bourgoanne, "the observer is every moment astonished at the new and interesting mixture of architecture and poetry. The palace of the Alhambra may be called a collection

of fugitive pieces; and whatever duration these may have, time, with which everything passes away, has too much contributed to confirm to them that title."—See *Bourgoanne's Travels in Spain.*

Note 31.

Tambour, and flute, and atabal, are there.

Atabal, a kind of Moorish drum.

Note 32.

Granada! for Castile and Arragon!

"Y ansi entraron en la ciudad, y subieron al Alhambra, y encima de la torre de Comares tan famosa se levantó la senal de la Santa Cruz, y luego el real estandarte de los dos Christianos reyes. Y al punto los reyes de armas, á grandes bozes dizieron, 'Granada! Granada! por su magestad, y por la reyna su muger.' La serenissima reyna D. Isabel que vió la senal de la Santa Cruz sobre la hermosa torre de Comares, y el su estandarte real con ella, se hincó de Rodillas, y dió infinitas gracias á Dios por la victoria que le avia dado contra aquella gran ciudad. La musica real de la capilla del rey luegó á canto de organo cantó Te Deum laudamus. Fué tan grande el plazer que todos lloravan. Luego del Alhambra sonaron mil instrumentos de musica de belicas trompetas. Los Moros amigos del rey, que querian ser Christianos, cuya cabeza era el valeroso Muça, tomaron mil dulzaynas y anafiles, sonando grande ruydo de atambores por toda la ciudad." *Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada.*

Note 33.

The festal lamps innumerably blaze.

"Los cavalleros Moros que avemos dicho, aquella noche jugaron galanamente alcancias y canas. Andava Granada aquella noche con tanta alegria, y con tantas luminarias, que parecia que se ardia la tierra."—*Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada.*

Swinburne, in his Travels through Spain, in the years 1775 and 1776, mentions that the anniversary of the surrender of Granada to Ferdinand and Isabella was still observed in the city as a great festival and day of rejoicing; and that the populace on that occasion paid an annual visit to the Moorish palace.

Note 34.

To Afric's wilds the royal exile flies.

"Los Gomeles todos se passaron en Africa, y el Rey Chico con ellos, que no quiso estar en España, y en Africa le mataron los Moros de aquellas partes, porque perdió á Granada."—*Guerras Civiles de Granada.*

Note 35.

Of him who knew not, as a man, to die.

Abo Abdeli, upon leaving Granada, after its conquest by Ferdinand and Isabella, stopped on the hill of Padul to take a last look of his city and palace. Overcome by the sight, he burst into tears, and was thus reproached by his mother, the Sultaness Ayxa: "Thou dost well to weep, like a woman, over the loss of that kingdom which thou knewest not how to defend and die for like a man."

Note 36.

Th' avenger's task is closed.

"El rey mandó, que si quedevan Zegris, que no viviessen en Granada, por la maldad que hizieron contra los Abencerrages."—*Guerras Civiles de Granada.*

Note 37.

'Midst the wild Alpuxarras.

"The Alpuxarras are so lofty that the coast of Barbary, and the cities of Tangier and Ceuta, are discovered from their summits; they are about seventeen leagues in length, from Veles Malaga to Almeria, and eleven in breadth, and abound with fruit-trees of great beauty and prodigious size. In these mountains the wretched remains of the Moors took refuge."—*Bourgoanne's Travels in Spain.*

Note 38.

Were but too blest if aught remain'd to fear.

"Plût à Dieu que je craignisse!"—*Andromaque.*

Note 39.

Rival the tints that float o'er summer skies.

Mrs. Radcliffe, in her journey along the banks of the Rhine, thus describes the colours of the granite rocks in the mountains of the Bergstrasse. "The nearer we approached these mountains, the more we had occasion to admire the various tints of their granites. Sometimes the precipices were of a faint pink, then of a deep red, a dull purple, or a blush approaching to lilac, and sometimes gleams of a pale yellow mingled with the low shrubs that grew upon their sides. The day was cloudless and bright, and we were too near these heights to be deceived by the illusions of aerial colouring; the real hues of their features were as beautiful, as their magnitude was sublime."

THE

WIDOW OF CRESCENTIUS.

"L'orage peut briser en un moment les fleurs qui tiennent encore la tête levée." —— *Mad. de Stael.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

"In the reign of Otho III. Emperor of Germany, the Romans, excited by their Consul, Crescentius, who ardently desired to restore the ancient glory of the republic, made a bold attempt to shake off the Saxon yoke, and the authority of the Popes, whose vices rendered them objects of universal contempt. The Consul was besieged by Otho in the Mole of Hadrian, which, long afterwards, continued to be called the Tower of Crescentius. Otho, after many unavailing attacks upon this fortress, at last entered into negotiations; and pledging his imperial word to respect the life of Crescentius, and the rights of the Roman citizens, the unfortunate leader was betrayed into his power, and immediately beheaded, with many of his partisans. Stephania, his widow, concealing her affliction and her resentment for the insults to which she had been exposed, secretly resolved to revenge her husband and herself. On the return of Otho from a pilgrimage to Mount Gargana, which perhaps a feeling of remorse had induced him to undertake, she found means to be introduced to him, and to gain his confidence; and a poison administered by her was soon afterwards the cause of his painful death."—See *Sismondi, History of the Italian Republics*, vol. i.

PART I.

'Midst Tivoli's luxuriant glades,
Bright-foaming falls, and olive shades,
Where dwelt, in days departed long,
The sons of battle and of song,
No tree, no shrub its foliage rears,
But o'er the wrecks of other years,
Temples and domes, which long have been
The soil of that enchanted scene.

There the wild fig-tree and the vine
O'er Hadrian's mouldering villa twine; (1)
The cypress, in funereal grace,
Usurps the vanish'd column's place;
O'er fallen shrine, and ruin'd frieze,
The wall-flower rustles in the breeze;
Acanthus-leaves the marble hide,
They once adorn'd in sculptured pride;
And nature hath resumed her throne
O'er the vast works of ages flown.

Was it for this that many a pile,
Pride of Ilissus and of Nile,
To Anio's banks the image lent
Of each imperial monument? (2)
Now Athens weeps her scatter'd fanes,
Thy temples, Egypt, strew thy plains;
And the proud fabrics Hadrian rear'd
From Tiber's vale have disappear'd.
We need no prescient sibyl there,
The doom of grandeur to declare,

Each stone, where weeds and ivy climb,
Reveals some oracle of Time:
Each relic utters Fate's decree,
The future as the past shall be.

Halls of the dead! in Tiber's vale,
Who now shall tell your lofty tale?
Who trace the high patrician's dome,
The bard's retreat, the hero's home?
When moss-clad wrecks alone record,
There dwelt the world's departed lord!
In scenes where verdure's rich array
Still sheds young beauty o'er decay,
And sunshine, on each glowing hill,
'Midst ruins finds a dwelling still.

Sunk is thy palace, but thy tomb,
Hadrian! hath shared a prouder doom, (3)
Though vanish'd with the days of old
Its pillars of Corinthian mould;
And the fair forms by sculpture wrought,
Each bodying some immortal thought,
Which o'er that temple of the dead,
Serene, but solemn beauty shed,
Have found, like glory's self, a grave
In Time's abyss or Tiber's wave: (4)
Yet dreams more lofty, and more fair,
Than art's bold hand hath imaged e'er,
High thoughts of many a mighty mind,
Expanding when all else declined,
In twilight years, when only they
Recall'd the radiance pass'd away,
Have made that ancient pile their home,
Fortress of freedom and of Rome.

There he, who strove in evil days,
Again to kindle glory's rays,
Whose spirit sought a path of light,
For those dim ages far too bright,
Crescentius long maintain'd the strife,
Which closed but with its martyr's life,
And left the imperial tomb a name,
A heritage of holier fame.
There closed De Brescia's mission high,
From thence the patriot came to die; (5)
And thou, whose Roman soul the last,
Spoke with the voice of ages past, (6)
Whose thoughts so long from earth had fled,
To mingle with the glorious dead,
That 'midst the world's degenerate race,
They vainly sought a dwelling-place,
Within that house of death didst brood
O'er visions to thy ruin woo'd.
Yet worthy of a brighter lot,
Rienzi! be thy faults forgot!
For thou, when all around thee lay
Chain'd in the slumbers of decay;
So sunk each heart, that mortal eye
Had scarce a *tear* for liberty;
Alone, amidst the darkness there,
Couldst gaze on Rome—yet not despair! (7)

'T is morn, and Nature's richest dyes
Are floating o'er Italian skies;
Tints of transparent lustre shine
Along the snow-clad Apennine;
The clouds have left Soracte's height,
And yellow Tiber winds in light,

Where tombs and fallen fanes have strew'd
The wild Campagna's solitude.
'T is sad amidst that scene to trace
Those relics of a vanish'd race;
Yet o'er the ravaged path of time,
Such glory sheds that brilliant clime,
Where nature still, though empires fall,
Holds her triumphant festival;
E'en desolation wears a smile,
Where skies and sunbeams laugh the while;
And Heaven's own light, Earth's richest bloom,
Array the ruin and the tomb.

But she, who from yon convent tower
Breathes the pure freshness of the hour;
She, whose rich flow of raven hair
Streams wildly on the morning air;
Heeds not how fair the scene below,
Robed in Italia's brightest glow,
Though throned 'midst Latium's classic plains
Th' Eternal City's towers and fanes,
And they, the Pleiades of earth,
The seven proud hills of Empire's birth,
Lie spread beneath: not now her glance
Roves o'er that vast, sublime expanse;
Inspired, and bright with hope, 't is thrown
On Hadrian's massy tomb alone;
There, from the storm when Freedom fled,
His faithful few Crescentius led!
While she, his anxious bride, who now
Bends o'er the scene her youthful brow,
Sought refuge in the hallow'd fane,
Which then could shelter, not in vain.

But now the lofty strife is o'er,
And Liberty shall weep no more.
At length imperial Otho's voice
Bids her devoted sons rejoice;
And he, who battled to restore
The glories and the rights of yore,
Whose accents, like the clarion's sound,
Could burst the dead repose around,
Again his native Rome shall see,
The sceptred city of the free!
And young Stephania waits the hour
When leaves her lord his fortress-tower,
Her ardent heart with joy elate,
That seems beyond the reach of fate;
Her mien, like creature from above,
All vivified with hope and love.

Fair is her form, and in her eye
Lives all the soul of Italy!
A meaning lofty and inspired,
As by her native day-star fired:
Such wild and high expression, fraught
With glances of impassion'd thought,
As fancy sheds in visions bright
O'er priestess of the God of Light!
And the dark locks that lend her face
A youthful and luxuriant grace,
Wave o'er her cheek, whose kindling dyes
Seem from the fire within to rise;
But deepen'd by the burning heaven
To her own land of sunbeams given.
Italian art that fervid glow
Would o'er ideal beauty throw,

And with such ardent life express
Her high-wrought dreams of loveliness;—
Dreams which, surviving Empire's fall,
The shade of glory still recall.

But see,—the banner of the brave
O'er Hadrian's tomb hath ceased to wave.
'T is lower'd—and now Stephania's eye
Can well the martial train descry,
Who, issuing from that ancient dome,
Pour through the crowded streets of Rome.
Now from her watch-tower on the height,
With step as fabled wood-nymph's light,
She flies—and swift her way pursues
Through the lone convent's avenues.
Dark cypress-groves, and fields o'erspread
With records of the conquering dead,
And paths which track a glowing waste,
She traverses in breathless haste:
And by the tombs where dust is shrined,
Once tenanted by loftiest mind,
Still passing on, hath reach'd the gate
Of Rome, the proud, the desolate!
Throng'd are the streets, and, still renew'd,
Rush on the gathering multitude.

Is it their high-soul'd chief to greet,
That thus the Roman thousands meet?
With names that bid their thoughts ascend,
Crescentius, thine in song to blend;
And of triumphal days gone by
Recall th' inspiring pageantry?
—There is an air of breathless dread,
An eager glance, a hurrying tread;

And now a fearful silence round,
And now a fitful murmuring sound,
'Midst the pale crowds, that almost seem
Phantoms of some tumultuous dream.
Quick is each step, and wild each mien,
Portentous of some awful scene.
Bride of Crescentius! as the throng
Bore thee with whelming force along,
How did thine anxious heart beat high,
Till rose suspense to agony!
Too brief suspense, that soon shall close,
And leave thy heart to deeper woes.

Who 'midst yon guarded precinct stands,
With fearless mien, but fetter'd hands?
The ministers of death are nigh,
Yet a calm grandeur lights his eye;
And in his glance there lives a mind,
Which was not form'd for chains to bind,
But cast in such heroic mould
As theirs, th' ascendant ones of old.
Crescentius! freedom's daring son,
Is this the guerdon thou hast won?
Oh, worthy to have lived and died
In the bright days of Latium's pride!
Thus must the beam of glory close,
O'er the seven hills again that rose,
When at thy voice to burst the yoke,
The soul of Rome indignant woke?
Vain dream! the sacred shields are gone, (8)
Sunk is the crowning city's throne: (9)
Th' illusions that around her cast
Their guardian spells have long been past. (10)

Thy life hath been a shot star's ray,
Shed o'er her midnight of decay;
Thy death at Freedom's ruin'd shrine
Must rivet every chain—but thine.

Calm is his aspect, and his eye
Now fix'd upon the deep-blue sky,
Now on those wrecks of ages fled,
Around in desolation spread;
Arch, temple, column, worn and grey,
Recording triumphs pass'd away;
Works of the mighty and the free,
Whose steps on earth no more shall be,
Though their bright course hath left a trace
Nor years nor sorrows can efface.

Why changes now the patriot's mien,
Erewhile so loftily serene?
Thus can approaching death control
The might of that commanding soul?
No!—Heard ye not that thrilling cry
Which told of bitterest agony?
He heard it, and, at once subdued,
Hath sunk the hero's fortitude,
He heard it, and his heart too well
Whence rose that voice of woe can tell;
And 'midst the gazing throngs around
One well-known form his glance hath found;
One fondly loving and beloved,
In grief, in peril, faithful proved.
Yes, in the wildness of despair,
She, his devoted bride, is there.
Pale, breathless, through the crowd she flies,
The light of frenzy in her eyes:

But ere her arms can clasp the form
Which life ere long must cease to warm;
Ere on his agonizing breast
Her heart can heave, her head can rest;
Check'd in her course by ruthless hands,
Mute, motionless, at once she stands;
With bloodless cheek and vacant glance,
Frozen and fix'd in horror's trance;
Spell-bound, as every sense were fled,
And thought o'erwhelm'd, and feeling dead.
And the light waving of her hair,
And veil, far floating on the air,
Alone, in that dread moment, show,
She is no sculptured form of woe.

The scene of grief and death is o'er,
The patriot's heart shall throb no more;
But *hers*—so vainly form'd to prove
The pure devotedness of love,
And draw from fond affection's eye
All thought sublime, all feeling high;
When consciousness again shall wake,
Hath now no refuge—but to break.
The spirit long inured to pain
May smile at fate in calm disdain;
Survive its darkest hour, and rise
In more majestic energies.
But in the glow of vernal pride,
If each warm hope *at once* hath died,
Then sinks the mind, a blighted flower,
Dead to the sunbeam and the shower;
A broken gem, whose inborn light
Is scatter'd—ne'er to reunite.

PART II.

Hast thou a scene that is not spread
With records of thy glory fled?
A monument that doth not tell
The tale of liberty's farewell?
Italia! thou art but a grave
Where flowers luxuriate o'er the brave,
And Nature gives her treasures birth
O'er all that hath been great on earth.
Yet smile thy heavens as once they smiled,
When thou wert Freedom's favour'd child:
Though fane and tomb alike are low,
Time hath not dimm'd thy sunbeam's glow;
And robed in that exulting ray,
Thou seem'st to triumph o'er decay;
O yet, though by thy sorrows bent,
In nature's pomp magnificent!
What marvel if, when all was lost,
Still on thy bright enchanted coast,
Though many an omen warn'd him thence,
Linger'd the lord of eloquence! (11)
Still gazing on the lovely sky,
Whose radiance woo'd him—but to die:
Like him, *who* would not linger there,
Where heaven, earth, ocean, all are fair?
Who 'midst thy glowing scenes could dwell,
Nor bid awhile his griefs farewell?
Hath not thy pure and genial air
Balm for all sadness but despair? (12)
No! there are pangs, whose deep-worn trace
Not all thy magic can efface!

Hearts, by unkindness wrung, may learn
The world and all its gifts to spurn;
Time may steal on with silent tread,
And dry the tear that mourns the dead;
May change fond love, subdue regret,
And teach e'en vengeance to forget:
But thou, Remorse! there is no charm
Thy sting, avenger, to disarm!
Vain are bright suns, and laughing skies,
To soothe thy victim's agonies:
The heart once made thy burning throne,
Still, while it beats, is thine alone.

In vain for Otho's joyless eye
Smile the fair scenes of Italy,
As through her landscapes' rich array
Th' imperial pilgrim bends his way.
Thy form, Crescentius, on his sight
Rises when nature laughs in light,
Glides round him at the midnight hour,
Is present in his festal bower,
With awful voice and frowning mien,
By all but him unheard, unseen.
Oh! thus to shadows of the grave
Be every tyrant still a slave!

Where through Gargano's woody dells,
O'er bending oaks the north-wind swells, (13)
A sainted hermit's lowly tomb
Is bosom'd in umbrageous gloom,
In shades that saw him live and die
Beneath their waving canopy.
'T was his, as legends tell, to share
The converse of immortals there;

Around that dweller of the wild
There "bright appearances" have smiled, (14)
And angel-wings, at eve, have been
Gleaming the shadowy boughs between.
And oft from that secluded bower
Hath breathed, at midnight's calmer hour,
A swell of viewless harps, a sound
Of warbled anthems pealing round.
Oh, none but voices of the sky
Might wake that thrilling harmony,
Whose tones, whose very echoes, made
An Eden of the lonely shade!

Years have gone by; the hermit sleeps
Amidst Gargano's woods and steeps!
Ivy and flowers have half o'ergrown
And veil'd his low, sepulchral stone:
Yet still the spot is holy, still
Celestial footsteps haunt the hill;
And oft the awe-struck mountaineer
Aërial vesper-hymns may hear
Around those forest-precincts float,
Soft, solemn, clear,—but still remote.
Oft will Affliction breathe her plaint
To that rude shrine's departed saint,
And deem that spirits of the blest
There shed sweet influence o'er her breast.

And thither Otho now repairs,
To soothe his soul with vows and prayers;
And if for him, on holy ground,
The lost one, Peace, may yet be found,
'Midst rocks and forests, by the bed
Where calmly sleep the sainted dead,

She dwells, remote from heedless eye,
With Nature's lonely majesty.

Vain, vain the search—his troubled breast
Nor vow nor penance lulls to rest;
The weary pilgrimage is o'er,
The hopes that cheer'd it are no more.
Then sinks his soul, and day by day,
Youth's buoyant energies decay.
The light of health his eye hath flown,
The glow that tinged his cheek is gone.
Joyless as one on whom is laid
Some baleful spell that bids him fade,
Extending its mysterious power
O'er every scene, o'er every hour;
E'en thus he withers; and to him,
Italia's brilliant skies are dim.
He withers—in that glorious clime
Where Nature laughs in scorn of Time;
And suns, that shed on all below
Their full and vivifying glow,
From him alone their power withhold,
And leave his heart in darkness cold.
Earth blooms around him, heaven is fair,
He only seems to perish there.

Yet sometimes will a transient smile
Play o'er his faded cheek awhile,
When breathes his minstrel-boy a strain
Of power to lull all earthly pain;
So wildly sweet, its notes might seem
Th' ethereal music of a dream,
A spirit's voice from worlds unknown,
Deep thrilling power in every tone!

Sweet is that lay, and yet its flow
Hath language only given to woe;
And if at times its wakening swell
Some tale of glory seems to tell,
Soon the proud notes of triumph die,
Lost in a dirge's harmony:
Oh! many a pang the heart hath proved,
Hath deeply suffer'd, fondly loved,
Ere the sad strain could catch from thence
Such deep impassion'd eloquence!
Yes! gaze on him, that minstrel-boy—
He is no child of hope and joy;
Though few his years, yet have they been
Such as leave traces on the mien,
And o'er the roses of our prime
Breathe other blights than those of time.

Yet, seems his spirit wild and proud,
By grief unsoften'd and unbow'd.
Oh! there are sorrows which impart
A sternness foreign to the heart,
And rushing with an earthquake's power,
That makes a desert in an hour;
Rouse the dread passions in their course,
As tempests wake the billows' force!—
'T is sad on youthful Guido's face,
The stamp of woes like these to trace.
Oh! where can ruins awe mankind
Dark as the ruins of the mind?

His mien is lofty, but his gaze
Too well a wandering soul betrays:
His full, dark eye at times is bright
With strange and momentary light,

Whose quick uncertain flashes throw
O'er his pale cheek a hectic glow:
And oft his features and his air
A shade of troubled mystery wear,
A glance of hurried wildness, fraught
With some unfathomable thought.
Whate'er that thought, still, unexpress'd,
Dwells the sad secret in his breast;
The pride his haughty brow reveals,
All other passion well conceals.
He breathes each wounded feeling's tone
In music's eloquence alone;
His soul's deep voice is only pour'd
Through his full song and swelling chord.
He seeks no friend, but shuns the train
Of courtiers with a proud disdain;
And, save when Otho bids his lay
Its half unearthly power essay,
In hall or bower the heart to thrill,
His haunts are wild and lonely still.
Far distant from the heedless throng,
He roves old Tiber's banks along,
Where Empire's desolate remains
Lie scatter'd o'er the silent plains;
Or, lingering 'midst each ruin'd shrine
That strews the desert Palatine,
With mournful, yet commanding mien,
Like the sad Genius of the scene,
Entranced in awful thought appears
To commune with departed years.
Or at the dead of night, when Rome
Seems of heroic shades the home;
When Tiber's murmuring voice recalls
The mighty to their ancient halls;

When hush'd is every meaner sound,
And the deep moonlight-calm around
Leaves to the solemn scene alone
The majesty of ages flown;
A pilgrim to each hero's tomb,
He wanders through the sacred gloom;
And, 'midst those dwellings of decay,
At times will breathe so sad a lay,
So wild a grandeur in each tone,
'T is like a dirge for empires gone!

Awake thy pealing harp again,
But breathe a more exulting strain,
Young Guido! for awhile forgot
Be the dark secrets of thy lot,
And rouse th' inspiring soul of song
To speed the banquet's hour along!
The feast is spread; and music's call
Is echoing through the royal hall,
And banners wave, and trophies shine,
O'er stately guests in glittering line;
And Otho seeks awhile to chase
The thoughts he never can erase,
And bid the voice, whose murmurs deep
Rise like a spirit on his sleep,
The still small voice of conscience die,
Lost in the din of revelry.
On his pale brow dejection lowers,
But that shall yield to festal hours;
A gloom is in his faded eye,
But that from music's power shall fly:
His wasted cheek is wan with care,
But mirth shall spread fresh crimson there.

Wake, Guido! wake thy numbers high,
Strike the bold chord exultingly!
And pour upon th' enraptured ear
Such strains as warriors love to hear!
Let the rich mantling goblet flow,
And banish all resembling woe;
And, if a thought intrude, of power
To mar the bright convivial hour,
Still must its influence lurk unseen,
And cloud the heart—but not the mien!

Away, vain dream!—on Otho's brow
Still darker lower the shadows now;
Changed are his features, now o'erspread
With the cold paleness of the dead;
Now crimson'd with a hectic dye,
The burning flush of agony!
His lip is quivering, and his breast
Heaves, with convulsive pangs oppress'd;
Now his dim eye seems fix'd and glazed,
And now to heaven in anguish raised;
And as, with unavailing aid,
Around him throng his guests dismay'd,
He sinks—while scarce his struggling breath
Hath power to falter—"This is death!"

Then rush'd that haughty child of song,
Dark Guido, through the awe-struck throng;
Fill'd with a strange delirious light,
His kindling eye shone wildly bright,
And on the sufferer's mien awhile
Gazing with stern vindictive smile,
A feverish glow of triumph dyed
His burning cheek, while thus he cried:—

"Yes! these are death-pangs—on thy brow
Is set the seal of vengeance now!
Oh! well was mix'd the deadly draught,
And long and deeply hast thou quaff'd;
And bitter as thy pangs may be,
They are but guerdons meet from me!
Yet, these are but a moment's throes,
Howe'er intense, they soon shall close.
Soon shalt thou yield thy fleeting breath,
My life hath been a lingering death;
Since one dark hour of woe and crime,
A blood-spot on the page of time!

"Deem'st thou my mind of reason void?
It is not frenzied,—but destroy'd!
Ay! view the wreck with shuddering thought,—
That work of ruin thou hast wrought!

"The secret of thy doom to tell,
My name alone suffices well!
Stephania! once a hero's bride!
Otho! thou know'st the rest—*he died.*
Yes! trusting to a monarch's word,
The Roman fell, untried, unheard!
And thou, whose every pledge was vain,
How couldst *thou* trust in aught again?

"He died, and I was changed—my soul,
A lonely wanderer, spurn'd control.
From peace, and light, and glory hurl'd,
The outcast of a purer world,
I saw each brighter hope o'erthrown,
And lived for one dread task alone.
The task is closed—fulfill'd the vow,
The hand of death is on thee now.

Betrayer! in thy turn betray'd,
The debt of blood shall soon be paid!
Thine hour is come—the time hath been
My heart had shrunk from such a scene;
That feeling long is past—my fate
Hath made me stern as desolate.

"Ye, that around me shuddering stand,
Ye chiefs and princes of the land!
Mourn ye a guilty monarch's doom?
—Ye wept not o'er the patriot's tomb!
He sleeps unhonour'd—yet be mine
To share his low, neglected shrine.
His soul with freedom finds a home,
His grave is that of glory—Rome!
Are not the great of old with her,
That city of the sepulchre?
Lead me to death! and let me share
The slumbers of the mighty there!"

The day departs—that fearful day
Fades in calm loveliness away;
From purple heavens its lingering beam
Seems melting into Tiber's stream,
And softly tints each Roman hill
With glowing light, as clear and still,
As if, unstain'd by crime or woe,
Its hours had pass'd in silent flow.
The day sets calmly—it hath been
Mark'd with a strange and awful scene;
One guilty bosom throbs no more,
And Otho's pangs and life are o'er.
And thou, ere yet another sun
His burning race hath brightly run,

Released from anguish by thy foes,
Daughter of Rome! shalt find repose.—
Yes! on thy country's lovely sky
Fix yet once more thy parting eye!
A few short hours—and all shall be
The silent and the past for thee.
Oh! thus with tempests of a day
We struggle, and we pass away,
Like the wild billows as they sweep,
Leaving no vestige on the deep!
And o'er thy dark and lowly bed
The sons of future days shall tread,
The pangs, the conflicts, of thy lot,
By them unknown, by thee forgot.

NOTES.

Note 1.

O'er Hadrian's mouldering villa twine.

"J'étais allé passer quelques jours seul à Tivoli. Je parcourus ses environs, et surtout celles de la Villa Adriana. Surpris par la pluie au milieu de ma course, je me réfugiai dans les Salles des *Thermes* voisins du *Pécile* (monumens de la villa), sous un figuier qui avait renversé le pan d'un mur en s'élevant. Dans un petit salon octogone, ouvert devant moi, une vigne vierge avait percé la voûte de l'édifice, et son gros cep lisse, rouge, et tortueux, montait le long du mur comme un serpent. Autour de moi, à travers les arcades des ruines, s'ouvraient des points de vue sur la Campagne Romaine. Des buissons de sureau remplis-

saient les salles désertes où venaient se réfugier quelques merles solitaires. Les fragmens de maçonnerie étaient tapissés des feuilles de scolopendre, dont la verdure satinée se dessinait comme un travail en mosaïque sur la blancheur des marbres: çà et là de hauts cyprès remplaçaient les colonnes tombées dans ces palais de la Mort; l'acanthe sauvage rampait à leurs pieds, sur des débris, comme si la nature s'était plu à reproduire sur ces chefs-d'œuvre mutilés de l'architecture, l'ornement de leur beauté passée. —— *Chateaubriand. Souvenirs d'Italie.*

Note 2.

Of each imperial monument.

The gardens and buildings of Hadrian's villa were copies of the most celebrated scenes and edifices in his dominions; the Lycæum, the Academia, the Prytaneum of Athens, the Temple of Serapis at Alexandria, the Vale of Tempe, &c.

Note 3.

Sunk is thy palace, but thy tomb,
Hadrian! hath shared a prouder doom.

The mausoleum of Hadrian, now the castle of St. Angelo, was first converted into a citadel by Belisarius, in his successful defence of Rome against the Goths. "The lover of the arts," says Gibbon, "must read with a sigh, that the works of Praxiteles and Lysippus were torn from their lofty pedestals, and hurled into the ditch on the heads of the besiegers." He adds, in a note, that the celebrated Sleeping Faun of the Barbarini palace was found, in a mutilated state, when the ditch of St. Angelo was cleansed under Urban VIII. In the middle ages, the *moles Hadriani* was made a permanent fortress by the Roman government, and bastions, outworks, &c. were added to the original edifice, which had been stripped of its marble covering, its Corinthian pillars, and the brazen cone which crowned its summit.

Note 4.

Have found, like glory's self, a grave,
In time's abyss, or Tiber's wave.

"Les plus beaux monumens des arts, les plus admirables statues ont été jetées dans le Tibre, et sont cachées sous ses flots.

Qui sait si, pour les chercher, on ne le détournera pas un jour de son lit? Mais quand on songe que les chef-d'œuvres du génie humain sont peutêtre là devant nous, et qu'un œil plus perçant les verrait à travers les ondes, l'on éprouve je ne sais quelle émotion qui renaît à Rome sans cesse sous diverses formes, et fait trouver une société pour la pensée dans les objects physiques, muets partout ailleurs." —— *Mad. de Stael.*

Note 5.

There closed De Brescia's mission high,
From thence the patriot came to die.

Arnold de Brescia, the undaunted and eloquent champion of Roman liberty, after unremitting efforts to restore the ancient constitution of the republic, was put to death in the year 1155 by Adrian IV. This event is thus described by Sismondi, *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, vol. ii. pages 68 and 69. "Le préfect demeura dans le château Saint Ange avec son prisonnier; il le fit transporter un matin sur la place destinée aux exécutions, devant la Porte du Peuple. Arnaud de Brescia, élevé sur un bûcher, fut attaché à un poteau, en face du Corso. Il pouvoit mesurer des yeux les trois longues rues qui aboutissoient devant son échafaud; elles font presqu'une moitié de Rome. C'est là qu'habitoient les hommes qu'il avoit si souvent appelés à la liberté. Ils reposoient encore en paix, ignorant le danger de leur législateur. Le tumulte de l'exécution et la flamme du bûcher réveillèrent les Romains; ils s'armèrent, ils accoururent, mais trop tard; et les cohortes du pape repoussèrent, avec leurs lances, ceux qui, n'ayant pu sauver Arnaud, vouloient du moins recueillir ses cendres comme de précieuses reliques."

Note 6.

Spoke with the voice of ages past.

"Posterity will compare the virtues and failings of this extraordinary man; but in a long period of anarchy and servitude the name of Rienzi has often been celebrated as the deliverer of his country, and the last of the Roman patriots."—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall, &c.* vol. xii. p. 362.

Note 7.

Couldst gaze on Rome—yet not despair!

"Le consul Terentius Varron avoit fui honteusement jusqu'à Vénouse: cet homme de la plus basse naissance, n'avoit été élevé au consulat que pour mortifier la noblesse: mais le sénat ne voulut pas jouir de ce malheureux triomphe; il vit combien il étoit nécessaire qu'il s'attirât dans cette occasion la confiance du peuple, il alla au-devant Varron, et le remercia de ce *qu'il n'avoit pas désespéré de la république.*"——*Montesquieu. Grandeur et Décadence des Romains.*

Note 8.

Vain dream! the sacred shields are gone.

Of the sacred bucklers, or *ancilia* of Rome, which were kept in the temple of Mars, Plutarch gives the following account. "In the eighth year of Numa's reign a pestilence prevailed in Italy; Rome also felt its ravages. While the people were greatly dejected, we are told that a brazen buckler fell from heaven into the hands of Numa. Of this he gave a very wonderful account, received from Egeria and the Muses: that the buckler was sent down for the preservation of the city, and should be kept with great care: that eleven others should be made as like it as possible in size and fashion, in order that if any person were disposed to steal it, he might not be able to distinguish that which fell from heaven from the rest. He further declared, that the place, and the meadows about it, where he frequently conversed with the Muses, should be consecrated to those divinities; and that the spring which watered the ground should be sacred to the use of the Vestal Virgins, daily to sprinkle and purify their temple. The immediate cessation of the pestilence is said to have confirmed the truth of this account."——*Life of Numa.*

Note 9.

Sunk is the crowning city's throne.

"Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the *crowning city*, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth?"——*Isaiah*, chap. xxiii.

Note 10.

Their guardian spells have long been past.

"Un mélange bizarre de grandeur d'âme et de foiblesse entroit dès cette époque (l'onzième siècle) dans le caractère des Romains.—Un mouvement généreux vers les grandes choses faisoit place tout-à-coup à l'abattement; ils passoient de la liberté la plus orageuse, à la servitude la plus avilissante. On auroit dit que les ruines et les portiques déserts de la capitale du monde, entretenoient ses habitans dans les sentimens de leur impuissance; au milieu de ces monumens de leur domination passée, les citoyens éprouvoient d'une manière trop décourageante leur propre nullité. Le nom des Romains qu'il portoit ranimoit fréquemment leur enthousiasme, comme il le ranime encore aujourd'hui; mais bientôt la vue de Rome, du Forum désert, des sept collines de nouveau rendues au pâturage des troupeaux, des temples désolés, des monumens tombant en ruine, les ramenoit à sentir qu'ils n'étoient plus les Romains d'autrefois." —— *Sismondi. Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, vol. i. p. 172.

Note 11.

Linger'd the lord of eloquence?

"As for Cicero, he was carried to Astyra, where, finding a vessel, he immediately went on board, and coasted along to Circæum with a favourable wind. The pilots were preparing immediately to sail from thence, but whether it was that he feared the sea, or had not yet given up all his hopes in Cæsar, he disembarked, and travelled a hundred furlongs on foot, as if Rome had been the place of his destination. Repenting, however, afterwards, he left that road and made again for the sea. He passed the night in the most perplexing and horrid thoughts; insomuch, that he was sometimes inclined to go privately into Cæsar's house and stab himself upon the altar of his domestic gods, to bring the divine vengeance upon his betrayer. But he was deterred from this by the fear of torture. Other alternatives equally distressful presented themselves. At last he put himself in the hands of his servants, and ordered them to carry him by sea to Cajeta, where he had a delightful retreat in the summer, when the Etesian winds set in. There was a temple of Apollo on that coast, from

which a flight of crows came with great noise towards Cicero's vessel as it was making land. They perched on both sides the sail-yard, where some sat croaking, and others pecking the ends of the ropes. All looked upon this as an ill omen; yet Cicero went on shore, and, entering his house, lay down to repose himself. In the mean time a number of crows settled in the chamber-window, and croaked in the most doleful manner. One of them even entered it, and alighting on the bed, attempted, with its beak, to draw off the clothes with which he had covered his face. On sight of this, the servants began to reproach themselves. 'Shall we,' said they, 'remain to be spectators of our master's murder? Shall we not protect him, so innocent and so great a sufferer as he is, when the brute creatures give him marks of their care and attention?' Then, partly by entreaty, partly by force, they got him into his litter, and carried him towards the sea."—*Plutarch. Life of Cicero.*

Note 12.

Balm for all sadness but despair?

"Now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair." —— *Milton.*

Note 13.

O'er bending oaks the north-wind swells.

Mount Gargano. "This ridge of mountains forms a very large promontory advancing into the Adriatic, and separated from the Apennines on the west by the plains of Lucera and San Severo. We took a ride into the heart of the mountains through shady dells and noble woods, which brought to our minds the venerable groves that in ancient times bent with the loud winds sweeping along the rugged sides of Garganus.

'Aquilonibus
Querceta Gargani laborant,
Et foliis viduantur orni.'——*Horace.*

There is a respectable forest of evergreen and common oak, pine, hornbeam, chestnut, and manna-ash. The sheltered valleys are industriously cultivated, and seem to be blest with luxuriant vegetation." —— *Swinburne's Travels.*

Note 14.

There "bright appearances" have smiled.

'In yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footstep trace?' — *Milton.*

THE LAST BANQUET

OF

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.

"Antony, concluding that he could not die more honourably than in battle, determined to attack Cæsar at the same time both by sea and land. The night preceding the execution of this design, he ordered his servants at supper to render him their best services that evening, and fill the wine round plentifully, for the day following they might belong to another master, whilst he lay extended on the ground, no longer of consequence either to them or to himself. His friends were affected, and wept to hear him talk thus; which when he perceived, he encouraged them by assurances that his expectations of a glorious victory were at least equal to those of an honourable death. At the dead of night, when universal silence reigned through the city, a silence that was deepened by the awful thought of the ensuing day, on a sudden was heard the sound of musical instruments, and a noise which resembled the exclamations of Bacchanals. This tumultuous procession seemed to pass through the whole city, and to go out at the gate which led to the enemy's camp. Those who reflected on this prodigy concluded that Bacchus, the god whom Antony affected to imitate, had then forsaken him." —— *Langhorne's Plutarch.*

Thy foes had girt thee with their dread array,
O stately Alexandria!—yet the sound
Of mirth and music, at the close of day,
Swell'd from thy splendid fabrics far around

O'er camp and wave. Within the royal hall,
In gay magnificence the feast was spread;
And brightly streaming from the pictured wall,
A thousand lamps their trembling lustre shed
O'er many a column rich with precious dyes,
That tinge the marble's vein, 'neath Afric's burning skies.

And soft and clear that wavering radiance play'd
O'er sculptured forms that round the pillar'd scene
Calm and majestic rose, by art array'd
In god-like beauty, awfully serene.
Oh! how unlike the troubled guests, reclined
Round that luxurious board!—in every face
Some shadow from the tempest of the mind
Rising by fits, the searching eye might trace,
Though vainly mask'd in smiles which are not mirth,
But the proud spirit's veil thrown o'er the woes of earth.

Their brows are bound with wreaths whose transient bloom
May still survive the wearers—and the rose
Perchance may scarce be wither'd when the tomb
Receives the mighty to its dark repose!
The day must dawn on battle—and may set
In death—but fill the mantling wine-cup high!
Despair is fearless, and the Fates e'en yet
Lend her one hour for parting revelry.
They who the empire of the world possess'd
Would taste its joys again, ere all exchanged for rest

Its joys! oh! mark yon proud triumvir's mien,
And read their annals on that brow of care!

'Midst pleasure's lotus-bowers his steps have been;
Earth's brightest pathway led him to despair.
Trust not the glance that fain would yet inspire
The buoyant energies of days gone by;
There is delusion in its meteor-fire,
And all within is shame, is agony!
Away! the tear in bitterness may flow,
But there are smiles which bear a stamp of deeper woe.

Thy cheek is sunk, and faded as thy fame,
O lost, devoted Roman! yet thy brow
To that ascendant and undying name,
Pleads with stern loftiness thy right e'en now.
Thy glory is departed—but hath left
A lingering light around thee—in decay
Not less than kingly, though of all bereft,
Thou seem'st as empire had not pass'd away.
Supreme in ruin! teaching hearts elate,
A deep, prophetic dread of still mysterious fate!

But thou, enchantress-queen! whose love hath made
His desolation—thou art by his side,
In all thy sovereignty of charms array'd,
To meet the storm with still unconquer'd pride.
Imperial being! e'en though many a stain
Of error be upon thee, there is power
In thy commanding nature, which shall reign
O'er the stern genius of misfortune's hour;
And the dark beauty of thy troubled eye
E'en now is all illumed with wild sublimity.

Thine aspect all impassion'd wears a light
Inspiring and inspired—thy cheek a dye,
Which rises not from joy, but yet is bright
With the deep glow of feverish energy.

Proud siren of the Nile! thy glance is fraught
With an immortal fire—in every beam
It darts, there kindles some heroic thought,
But wild and awful as a sibyl's dream;
For thou with death hast communed, to attain
Dread knowledge of the pangs that ransom from the chain. (1)

And the stern courage by such musings lent,
Daughter of Afric! o'er thy beauty throws
The grandeur of a regal spirit, blent
With all the majesty of mighty woes!
While he, so fondly, fatally adored,
Thy fallen Roman, gazes on thee yet,
Till scarce the soul, that once exulting soar'd,
Can deem the day-star of its glory set;
Scarce his fond heart believes that power can be
In sovereign fate, o'er him, thus fondly loved by thee.

But there is sadness in the eyes around,
Which mark that ruin'd leader, and survey
His changeful mien, whence oft the gloom profound
Strange triumph chases haughtily away.
"Fill the bright goblet, warrior guests!" he cries,
"Quaff, ere we part, the generous nectar deep!
Ere sunset gild once more the western skies,
Your chief in cold forgetfulness may sleep,
While sounds of revel float o'er shore and sea,
And the red bowl again is crown'd—but not for me.

"Yet weep not thus—the struggle is not o'er,
O victors of Philippi!—many a field
Hath yielded palms to us:—one effort more,
By one stern conflict must our fate be seal'd!

Forget not, Romans! o'er a subject world
How royally your eagle's wing hath spread,
Though from his eyrie of dominion hurl'd,
Now bursts the tempest on his crested head;
Yet sovereign still, if banish'd from the sky,
The sun's indignant bird, he must not droop—but die."

The feast is o'er. 'T is night, the dead of night—
Unbroken stillness broods o'er earth and deep;
From Egypt's heaven of soft and starry light
The moon looks cloudless o'er a world of sleep:
For those who wait the morn's awakening beams,
The battle signal to decide their doom,
Have sunk to feverish rest and troubled dreams;
Rest, that shall soon be calmer in the tomb,
Dreams, dark and ominous, but *there* to cease,
When sleep the lords of war in solitude and peace.

Wake, slumberers, wake! Hark! heard ye not a sound
Of gathering tumult?—near and nearer still
Its murmur swells. Above, below, around
Bursts a strange chorus forth, confused and shrill.
Wake, Alexandria! through thy streets the tread
Of steps unseen is hurrying, and the note
Of pipe, and lyre, and trumpet, wild and dread
Is heard upon the midnight air to float;
And voices, clamorous as in frenzied mirth,
Mingle their thousand tones which are not of the earth.

These are no mortal sounds—their thrilling strain
Hath more mysterious power, and birth more high;
And the deep horror chilling every vein
Owns them of stern, terrific augury.

Beings of worlds unknown! ye pass away,
O ye invisible and awful throng!
Your echoing footsteps and resounding lay
To Cæsar's camp exulting move along.
Thy gods forsake thee, Antony! the sky
By that dread sign reveals—thy doom—"Despair
and die!" (2)

NOTES.

Note 1.

Dread knowledge of the pangs that ransom from the chain.

Cleopatra made a collection of poisonous drugs, and being desirous to ascertain which was least painful in the operation, she tried them on the capital convicts. Such poisons as were quick in their operation, she found to be attended with violent pain and convulsions; such as were mildest were slow in their effect: she therefore applied herself to the examination of venomous creatures; at length she found that the bite of the asp was the most eligible kind of death, for it brought on a gradual kind of lethargy. —— See *Plutarch.*

Note 2.

Despair and die!

"To-morrow in the battle think on me,
And fall thy edgeless sword; despair and die!"
Richard III.

ALARIC IN ITALY.

After describing the conquest of Greece and Italy by the German and Scythian hordes, united under the command of Alaric, the historian of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" thus proceeds:—"Whether fame, or conquest, or riches, were the object of Alaric, he pursued that object with an indefatigable ardour, which could neither be quelled by adversity, nor satiated by success. No sooner had he reached the extreme land of Italy, than he was attracted by the neighbouring prospect of a fair and peaceful island. Yet even the possession of Sicily he considered only as an intermediate step to the important expedition which he already meditated against the continent of Africa. The straits of Rhegium and Messina are twelve miles in length, and, in the narrowest passage, about one mile and a half broad; and the fabulous monsters of the deep, the rocks of Scylla, and the whirlpool of Charybdis, could terrify none but the most timid and unskilful mariners: yet, as soon as the first division of the Goths had embarked, a sudden tempest arose, which sunk or scattered many of the transports: their courage was daunted by the terrors of a new element; and the whole design was defeated by the premature death of Alaric, which fixed, after a short illness, the fatal term of his conquests. The ferocious character of the barbarians was displayed in the funeral of a hero, whose valour and fortune they celebrated with mournful applause. By the labour of a captive multitude they forcibly diverted the course of the Busentinus, a small river that washes the walls of Consentia. The royal sepulchre, adorned with the splendid spoils and trophies of Rome, was constructed in the vacant bed; the waters were then restored to their natural channel, and the secret spot, where the remains of Alaric had been deposited, was for ever concealed by the inhu-

man massacre of the prisoners who had been employed to execute the work." —— See *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. v. p. 329.

Heard ye the Gothic trumpet's blast?
The march of hosts, as Alaric pass'd?
His steps have track'd that glorious clime,
The birth-place of heroic time;
But he, in northern deserts bred,
Spared not the living for the dead, (1)
Nor heard the voice, whose pleading cries
From temple and from tomb arise.
He pass'd—the light of burning fanes
Hath been his torch o'er Grecian plains;
And woke they not—the brave, the free,
To guard their own Thermopylæ?
And left they not their silent dwelling,
When Scythia's note of war was swelling?
No! where the bold Three Hundred slept,
Sad Freedom battled not—but wept!
For nerveless then the Spartan's hand,
And Thebes could rouse no Sacred Band;
Nor one high soul from slumber broke,
When Athens own'd the northern yoke.

But was there none for *thee* to dare
The conflict, scorning to despair?
O city of the seven proud hills!
Whose name e'en yet the spirit thrills,
As doth a clarion's battle-call,
Didst thou too, ancient empress, fall?
Did not Camillus from the chain
Ransom thy Capitol again?

Oh! who shall tell the days to be,
No patriot rose to bleed for thee?

Heard ye the Gothic trumpet's blast?
The march of hosts, as Alaric pass'd?
That fearful sound, at midnight deep, (2)
Burst on th' eternal city's sleep:
How woke the mighty? she, whose will
So long had bid the world be still,
Her sword a sceptre, and her eye
Th' ascendant star of destiny!
She woke—to view the dread array
Of Scythians rushing to their prey,
To hear her streets resound the cries
Pour'd from a thousand agonies!
While the strange light of flames, that gave
A ruddy glow to Tiber's wave,
Bursting in that terrific hour
From fane and palace, dome and tower,
Reveal'd the throngs, for aid divine
Clinging to many a worshipp'd shrine;
Fierce, fitful radiance wildly shed
O'er spear and sword with carnage red,
Shone o'er the suppliant and the flying,
And kindled pyres for Romans dying.

Weep, Italy! alas! that e'er
Should tears alone thy wrongs declare!
The time hath been when *thy* distress
Had roused up empires for redress!
Now, her long race of glory run,
Without a combat Rome is won,
And from her plunder'd temples forth
Rush the fierce children of the north,

To share beneath more genial skies
Each joy their own rude clime denies.

Ye who on bright Campania's shore
Bade your fair villas rise of yore,
With all their graceful colonnades,
And crystal baths and myrtle shades,
Along the blue Hesperian deep,
Whose glassy waves in sunshine sleep;
Beneath your olive and your vine
Far other inmates now recline,
And the tall plane, whose roots ye fed
With such libations duly shed, (3)
O'er guests, unlike your vanish'd friends,
Its bowery canopy extends:
For them the southern heaven is glowing,
The bright Falernian nectar flowing;
For them the marble halls unfold,
Where nobler beings dwelt of old,
Whose children for barbarian lords
Touch the sweet lyre's resounding chords,
Or wreaths of Pæstan roses twine,
To crown the sons of Elbe and Rhine.
Yet though luxurious they repose
Beneath Corinthian porticoes,
While round them into being start
The marvels of triumphant art;
Oh! not for them hath Genius given
To Parian stone the fire of heaven,
Enshrining in the forms he wrought
A bright eternity of thought.
In vain the natives of the skies
In breathing marble round them rise,

And sculptured nymphs, of fount or glade,
People the dark-green laurel shade;
Cold are the conqueror's heart and eye
To visions of divinity;
And rude his hand which dares deface
The models of immortal grace.

Arouse ye from your soft delights!
Chieftains! the war-note's call invites;
And other lands must yet be won,
And other deeds of havoc done.
Warriors! your flowery bondage break,
Sons of the stormy north, awake!
The barks are launching from the steep,
Soon shall the Isle of Ceres weep, (4)
And Afric's burning winds afar
Waft the shrill sounds of Alaric's war
Where shall his race of victory close?
When shall the ravaged earth repose?
But hark! what wildly mingling cries
From Scythia's camp tumultuous rise?
Why swells dread Alaric's name on air?
A sterner conqueror hath been there!
A conqueror—yet his paths are peace,
He comes to bring the world's release;
He of the sword that knows no sheath,
Th' avenger, the deliverer—Death!

Is then that daring spirit fled?
Doth Alaric slumber with the dead?
Tamed are the warrior's pride and strength,
And he and earth are calm at length.
The land where heaven unclouded shines,
Where sleep the sunbeams on the vines;

The land by conquest made his own,
Can yield him now—a grave alone.
But his—her lord from Alp to sea—
No common sepulchre shall be!
Oh, make his tomb where mortal eye
Its buried wealth may ne'er descry!
Where mortal foot may never tread
Above a victor-monarch's bed.
Let not his royal dust be hid
'Neath star-aspiring pyramid;
Nor bid the gather'd mound arise,
To bear his memory to the skies.
Years roll away—oblivion claims
Her triumph o'er heroic names;
And hands profane disturb the clay
That once was fired with glory's ray!
And Avarice, from their secret gloom,
Drags e'en the treasures of the tomb.
But thou, O leader of the free!
That general doom awaits not thee!
Thou, where no step may e'er intrude,
Shalt rest in regal solitude,
Till, bursting on thy sleep profound,
Th' Awakener's final trumpet sound.
Turn ye the waters from their course,
Bid Nature yield to human force,
And hollow in the torrent's bed
A chamber for the mighty dead.
The work is done—the captive's hand
Hath well obey'd his lord's command.
Within that royal tomb are cast
The richest trophies of the past,

The wealth of many a stately dome,
The gold and gems of plunder'd Rome:
And when the midnight stars are beaming,
And ocean-waves in stillness gleaming,
Stern in their grief, his warriors bear
The Chastener of the Nations there;
To rest at length from victory's toil,
Alone, with all an empire's spoil!

Then the freed current's rushing wave
Rolls o'er the secret of the grave;
Then streams the martyr'd captives' blood
To crimson that sepulchral flood,
Whose conscious tide alone shall keep
The mystery in its bosom deep.
Time hath past on since then—and swept
From earth the urns where heroes slept;
Temples of gods, and domes of kings,
Are mouldering with forgotten things;
Yet shall not ages e'er molest
The viewless home of Alaric's rest:
Still rolls, like them, th' unfailing river,
The guardian of his dust for ever.

NOTES.

Note 1.

Spared not the living for the dead.

After the taking of Athens by Sylla, "though such numbers were put to the sword, there were as many who laid violent

hands upon themselves in grief for their sinking country. What reduced the best men among them to this despair of finding any mercy or moderate terms for Athens, was the well-known cruelty of Sylla; yet partly by the intercession of Midias and Calliphon, and the exiles who threw themselves at his feet, partly by the entreaties of the senators who attended him in that expedition, and being himself satiated with blood besides, he was at last prevailed upon to stop his hand, and in compliment to the ancient Athenians, he said, 'he forgave the many for the sake of the few, *the living for the dead.*'"—— *Plutarch.*

Note 2.

That fearful sound, at midnight deep.

"At the hour of midnight, the Salarian gate was silently opened, and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet. Eleven hundred and sixty-three years after the foundation of Rome, the imperial city, which had subdued and civilized so considerable a portion of mankind, was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia."——*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. v. p. 311.

Note 3.

With rich libations duly shed.

The plane-tree was much cultivated among the Romans, on account of its extraordinary shade; and they used to nourish it with wine instead of water, believing (as Sir W. Temple observes, that "This tree loved that liquor as well as those who used to drink under its shade."—— See the *Notes to Melmoth's Pliny.*

Note 4.

Soon shall the isle of Ceres weep.

Sicily was anciently considered as the favoured and peculiar dominion of Ceres.

THE

WIFE OF ASDRUBAL.

"This governor, who had braved death when it was at a distance, and protested that the sun should never see him survive Carthage, this fierce Asdrubal, was so mean-spirited, as to come alone, and privately throw himself at the conqueror's feet. The general, pleased to see his proud rival humbled, granted his life, and kept him to grace his triumph. The Carthaginians in the citadel no sooner understood that their commander had abandoned the place, than they threw open the gates, and put the proconsul in possession of Byrsa. The Romans had now no enemy to contend with but the nine hundred deserters, who, being reduced to despair, retired into the temple of Esculapius, which was a second citadel within the first; there the proconsul attacked them; and these unhappy wretches, finding there was no way to escape, set fire to the temple. As the flames spread, they retreated from one part to another, till they got to the roof of the building; there Asdrubal's wife appeared in her best apparel, as if the day of her death had been a day of triumph; and after having uttered the most bitter imprecations against her husband, whom she saw standing below with Emilianus,—"Base coward!" said she, "the mean things thou hast done to save thy life shall not avail thee; thou shalt die this instant, at least in thy two children." Having thus spoken, she drew out a dagger, stabbed them both, and while they were yet struggling for life, threw them from the top of the temple, and leaped down after them into the flames."—*Ancient Universal History.*

The sun sets brightly—but a ruddier glow
O'er Afric's heaven the flames of Carthage throw;
Her walls have sunk, and pyramids of fire
In lurid splendour from her domes aspire;

Sway'd by the wind, they wave—while glares the sky,
As when the desert's red Simoom is nigh:
The sculptured altar, and the pillar'd hall,
Shine out in dreadful brightness ere they fall;
Far o'er the seas the light of ruin streams,
Rock, wave, and isle are crimson'd by its beams;
While captive thousands, bound in Roman chains,
Gaze in mute horror on their burning fanes;
And shouts of triumph, echoing far around,
Swell from the victor's tents with ivy crown'd.[1]
But mark! from yon fair temple's loftiest height
What towering form bursts wildly on the sight,
All regal in magnificent attire,
And sternly beauteous in terrific ire?
She might be deem'd a Pythia in the hour
Of dread communion and delirious power!
A being more than earthly, in whose eye
There dwells a strange and fierce ascendency.
The flames are gathering round—intensely bright,
Full on her features glares their meteor-light
But a wild courage sits triumphant there,
The stormy grandeur of a proud despair;
A daring spirit, in its woes elate,
Mightier than death, untameable by fate;
The dark profusion of her locks unbound,
Waves like a warrior's floating plumage round;
Flush'd is her cheek, inspired her haughty mien,
She seems the avenging goddess of the scene.

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[1] It was a Roman custom to adorn the tents of victors with ivy.

Are those *her* infants, that with suppliant cry,
Cling round her, shrinking as the flame draws nigh,
Clasp with their feeble hands her gorgeous vest,
And fain would rush for shelter to her breast?
Is that a mother's glance, where stern disdain,
And passion awfully vindictive, reign?

Fix'd is her eye on Asdrubal, who stands,
Ignobly safe, amidst the conquering bands;
On him who left her to that burning tomb,
Alone to share her children's martyrdom;
Who, when his country perish'd, fled the strife,
And knelt to win the worthless boon of life.
"Live, traitor, live!" she cries, "since dear to thee,
E'en in thy fetters, can existence be!
Scorn'd and dishonour'd live!—with blasted name,
The Roman's triumph not to grace, but shame.
O slave in spirit! bitter be thy chain,
With tenfold anguish to avenge my pain!
Still may the manes of thy children rise
To chase calm slumber from thy wearied eyes;
Still may their voices on the haunted air
In fearful whispers tell thee to despair,
Till vain remorse thy wither'd heart consume,
Scourged by relentless shadows of the tomb!
E'en now my sons shall die—and thou, their sire,
In bondage safe, shalt yet in them expire.
Think'st thou I love them not?—'T was thine to fly—
'T is mine with these to suffer and to die.
Behold their fate! the arms that cannot save
Have been their cradle, and shall be their grave."

Bright in her hand the lifted dagger gleams,
Swift from her children's hearts the life-blood streams;

With frantic laugh she clasps them to her breast,
Whose woes and passions soon shall be at rest;
Lifts one appealing, frenzied glance on high,
Then deep 'midst rolling flames is lost to mortal eye.

HELIODORUS IN THE TEMPLE.

From Maccabees, book 2. chapter iii. 21. "Then it would have pitied a man to see the falling-down of the multitude of all sorts, and the fear of the high-priest, being in such an agony.—22. They then called upon the Almighty Lord to keep the things committed of trust safe and sure, for those that had committed them.—23. Nevertheless, Heliodorus executed that which was decreed.—24. Now as he was there present himself with his guard about the treasury, the Lord of Spirits, and the Prince of all Power, caused a great apparition, so that all that presumed to come in with him were astonished at the power of God, and fainted, and were sore afraid.—25. For there appeared unto them a horse with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely, and smote at Heliodorus with his fore-feet, and it seemed that he that sat upon the horse had a complete harness of gold.—26. Moreover, two other young men appeared before him, notable in strength, excellent in beauty, and comely in apparel, who stood by him on either side, and scourged him continually, and gave him many sore stripes.—27. And Heliodorus fell suddenly to the ground, and was compassed with great darkness; but they that were with him took him up and put him into a litter.—28. Thus him that lately came with great train, and with all his guard into the said treasury, they carried out being unable to help himself with his weapons, and mani-

festly they acknowledged the power of God.—29. For he by the hand of God was cast down, and lay speechless, without all hope of life."

A sound of woe in Salem!—mournful cries
  Rose from her dwellings—youthful cheeks were
    pale,
Tears flowing fast from dim and aged eyes,
  And voices mingling in tumultuous wail;
Hands raised to heaven in agony of prayer,
And powerless wrath, and terror, and despair.

Thy daughters, Judah! weeping, laid aside
  The regal splendour of their fair array,
With the rude sackcloth girt their beauty's pride,
  And throng'd the streets in hurrying, wild dismay;
While knelt thy priests before *his* awful shrine,
Who made, of old, renown and empire thine.

But on the spoiler moves—the temple's gate,
  The bright, the beautiful, his guards unfold,
And all the scene reveals its solemn state,
  Its courts and pillars, rich with sculptured gold;
And man, with eye unhallow'd, views th' abode,
The sever'd spot, the dwelling-place of God.

Where art thou, Mighty Presence! that of yore
  Wert wont between the cherubim to rest,
Veil'd in a cloud of glory, shadowing o'er
  Thy sanctuary the chosen and the blest?
Thou! that didst make fair Sion's ark thy throne,
And call the oracle's recess thine own!

Angel of God! that through th' Assyrian host,
Clothed with the darkness of the midnight hour,
To tame the proud, to hush th' invader's boast,
Didst pass triumphant in avenging power,
Till burst the day-spring on the silent scene,
And death alone reveal'd where thou hadst been.

Wilt thou not wake, O Chastener! in thy might,
To guard thine ancient and majestic hill,
Where oft from heaven the full Shechinah's light
Hath stream'd the house of holiness to fill?
Oh! yet once more defend thy loved domain,
Eternal one! Deliverer! rise again!

Fearless of thee, the plunderer, undismay'd,
Hastes on, the sacred chambers to explore
Where the bright treasures of the fane are laid,
The orphan's portion, and the widow's store;
What recks *his* heart though age unsuccour'd die,
And want consume the cheek of infancy?

Away, intruders!—hark! a mighty sound!
Behold, a burst of light!—away, away!
A fearful glory fills the temple round,
A vision bright in terrible array!
And lo! a steed of no terrestrial frame,
His path a whirlwind, and his breath a flame!

His neck is clothed with thunder[1]—and his mane
Seems waving fire—the kindling of his eye

[1] "Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?"—*Job*, chap. xxxix. v. 19.

Is as a meteor—ardent with disdain
His glance—his gesture, fierce in majesty!
Instinct with light he seems, and formed to bear
Some dread archangel through the fields of air.

But who is he, in panoply of gold,
Throned on that burning charger? bright his form,
Yet in its brightness awful to behold,
And girt with all the terrors of the storm!
Lightning is on his helmet's crest—and fear
Shrinks from the splendour of his brow severe.

And by his side two radiant warriors stand
All-arm'd, and kingly in commanding grace—
Oh! more than kingly—godlike!—sternly grand
Their port indignant, and each dazzling face
Beams with the beauty to immortals given,
Magnificent in all the wrath of heaven.

Then sinks each gazer's heart—each knee is bow'd
In trembling awe—but, as to fields of fight,
Th' unearthly war-steed, rushing through the crowd,
Bursts on their leader in terrific might;
And the stern angels of that dread abode
Pursue its plunderer with the scourge of God.

Darkness—thick darkness!—low on earth he lies,
Rash Heliodorus—motionless and pale—
Bloodless his cheek, and o'er his shrouded eyes
Mists, as of death, suspend their shadowy veil;
And thus th' oppressor, by his fear-struck train,
Is borne from that inviolable fane.

The light returns—the warriors of the sky
Have pass'd, with all their dreadful pomp, away;
Then wakes the timbrel, swells the song on high
Triumphant as in Judah's elder day;
Rejoice, O city of the sacred hill!
Salem, exult! thy God is with thee still.

NIGHT-SCENE IN GENOA.

FROM SISMONDI'S "REPUBLIQUES ITALIENNES."

["En même temps que les Génois poursuivoient avec ardeur la guerre contre Pise, ils étoient déchirés eux-mêmes par une discorde civile. Les consuls de l'année 1169, pour rétablir la paix dans leur patrie, au milieu des factions sourdes à leur voix et plus puissantes qu'eux, furent obligés d'ourdir en quelque sorte une conspiration. Ils commençèrent par s'assurer secrètement des dispositions pacifiques de plusieurs des citoyens, qui cependant étoient entraînés dans les émeutes par leur parenté avec les chefs de faction; puis, se concertant avec le vénérable vieillard, Hugues, leur archevêque, ils firent, long-temps avant le lever du soleil, appeler au son des cloches les citoyens au parlement; ils se flattoient que la surprise et l'alarme de cette convocation inattendue, au milieu de l' obscurité de la nuit, rendroit l'assemblée et plus complète et plus docile. Les citoyens, en accourant au parlement général, virent, au milieu de la place publique, le vieil archevêque, entouré de son clergé en habit de cérémonies, et portant des torches allumées, tandis que les reliques de Saint Jean Baptiste, le protecteur de Gênes, étoient exposées devant lui, et que les citoyens les plus respectables portoient à leurs mains des croix suppliantes. Dès que l'assemblée fut formée, le

vieillard se leva, et de sa voix cassée il conjura les chefs de parti au nom du Dieu de paix, au nom du salut de leurs âmes, au nom de leur patrie et de la liberté, dont leurs discordes entraîneroient la ruine, de jurer sur l'évangile l'oubli de leurs querelles, et la paix à venir.

"Les hérauts, dès qu'il eut fini de parler, s'avancèrent aussitôt vers Roland Avogado, le chef de l'une des factions, qui étoit présent à l'assemblée, et, secondés par les acclamations de tout le peuple, et par les prières de ses parens eux-mêmes, ils le sommèrent de se conformer au vœu des consuls et de la nation.

"Roland, à leur approche, déchira ses habits, et, s'asseyant par terre en versant des larmes, il appela à haute voix les morts qu'il avoit juré de venger, et qui ne lui permettoient pas de pardonner leurs vieilles offenses. Comme on ne pouvoit le déterminer à s'avançer, les consuls eux-mêmes, l'archevêque et le clergé, s'approchèrent de lui, et, renouvelant leurs prières, ils l'entraînèrent enfin, et lui firent jurer sur l'évangile l'oubli de ses inimitiés passées.

"Les chefs du parti contraire, Foulques de Castro, et Ingo de Volta, n'étoient pas présens à l'assemblée, mais le peuple et le clergé se portèrent en foule à leurs maisons; ils les trouvèrent déjà ébranlés par ce qu'ils venoient d'apprendre, et, profitant de leur émotion, ils leur firent jurer une réconciliation sincère, et donner le baiser de paix aux chefs de la faction opposée. Alors les cloches de la ville sonnèrent en temoignage d'allégresse, et l'archevêque de retour sur la place publique entonna un Te Deum avec tout le peuple, en honneur du Dieu de paix qui avoit sauvé leur patrie." —— *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, vol. ii. pp. 149–50.]

In Genoa, when the sunset gave
Its last warm purple to the wave,
No sound of war, no voice of fear,
Was heard, announcing danger near:
Though deadliest foes were there, whose hate
But slumber'd till its hour of fate,

Yet calmly, at the twilight's close,
Sunk the wide city to repose.

But when deep midnight reign'd around,
All sudden woke the alarm-bell's sound,
Full swelling, while the hollow breeze
Bore its dread summons o'er the seas.
Then, Genoa, from their slumber started
Thy sons, the free, the fearless-hearted;
Then mingled with th' awakening peal
Voices, and steps, and clash of steel.
Arm, warriors, arm! for danger calls,
Arise to guard your native walls!
With breathless haste the gathering throng
Hurry the echoing streets along;
Through darkness rushing to the scene
Where their bold counsels still convene.
— But there a blaze of torches bright
Pours its red radiance on the night,
O'er fane, and dome, and column playing
With every fitful night-wind swaying,
Now floating o'er each tall arcade,
Around the pillar'd scene display'd,
In light relieved by depth of shade:
And now, with ruddy meteor-glare,
Full streaming on the silvery hair
And the bright cross of him who stands,
Rearing that sign with suppliant hands;
Girt with his consecrated train,
The hallow'd servants of the fane.
Of life's past woes, the fading trace
Hath given that aged patriarch's face

Expression holy, deep, resign'd,
The calm sublimity of mind.
Years o'er his snowy head have pass'd,
And left him of his race the last;
Alone on earth—yet still his mien
Is bright with majesty serene;
And those high hopes, whose guiding-star
Shines from th' eternal worlds afar,
Have with that light illumed his eye,
Whose fount is immortality,
And o'er his features pour'd a ray
Of glory, not to pass away.
He seems a being who hath known
Communion with his God alone,
On earth by nought but pity's tie
Detain'd a moment from on high!
One to sublimer worlds allied,
One, from all passion purified,
E'en now half-mingled with the sky,
And all prepared—oh! not to die—
But, like the prophet, to aspire,
In heaven's triumphal car of fire.
He speaks—and from the throngs around
Is heard not e'en a whisper'd sound;
Awe-struck each heart, and fix'd each glance,
They stand as in a spell-bound trance:
He speaks—oh! who can hear, nor own
The might of each prevailing tone?

"Chieftains and warriors! ye, so long
Aroused to strife by mutual wrong,

Whose fierce and far-transmitted hate
Hath made your country desolate;
Now by the love ye bear her name,
By that pure spark of holy flame
On freedom's altar brightly burning,
But, once extinguish'd, ne'er returning;
By all your hopes of bliss to come
When burst the bondage of the tomb:
By Him, the God who bade us live
To aid each other, and forgive—
I call upon ye to resign
Your discords at your country's shrine,
Each ancient feud in peace atone,
Wield your keen swords for her alone,
And swear upon the cross, to cast
Oblivion's mantle o'er the past!"

No voice replies—the holy bands
Advance to where yon chieftain stands,
With folded arms, and brow of gloom
O'ershadow'd by his floating plume.
To him they lift the cross—in vain
He turns—oh! say not with disdain,
But with a mien of haughty grief,
That seeks not, e'en from heaven, relief:
He rends his robes—he sternly speaks—
Yet tears are on the warrior's cheeks.

"Father! not thus the wounds may close
Inflicted by eternal foes.
Deem'st thou *thy* mandate can efface
The dread volcano's burning trace?

Or bid the earthquake's ravaged scene
Be, smiling, as it once hath been?
No! for the deeds the sword hath done
Forgiveness is not lightly won;
The words, by hatred spoke, may not
Be, as a summer breeze, forgot!
'Tis vain—we deem the war-feud's rage
A portion of our heritage.
Leaders, now slumbering with their fame,
Bequeath'd us that undying flame;
Hearts that have long been still and cold
Yet rule us from their silent mould;
And voices, heard on earth no more,
Speak to our spirits as of yore.
Talk not of mercy—blood alone
The stain of bloodshed may atone;
Nought else can pay that mighty debt,
The dead forbid us to forget."

He pauses—from the patriarch's brow
There beams more lofty grandeur now;
His reverend form, his aged hand,
Assume a gesture of command,
His voice is awful, and his eye
Fill'd with prophetic majesty.

"The dead!—and deem'st thou *they* retain
Aught of terrestrial passion's stain?
Of guilt incurr'd in days gone by,
Aught but the fearful penalty?
And say'st thou, mortal! blood alone
For deeds of slaughter may atone?

There *hath* been blood—by Him 'twas shed
To expiate every crime who bled;
Th' absolving God who died to save,
And rose in victory from the grave!
And by that stainless offering given
Alike for all on earth to heaven;
By that inevitable hour
When death shall vanquish pride and power,
And each departing passion's force
Concentrate all in late remorse;
And by the day when doom shall be
Pass'd on earth's millions, and on thee—
The doom that shall not be repeal'd,
Once utter'd, and for ever seal'd—
I summon thee, O child of clay!
To cast thy darker thoughts away,
And meet thy foes in peace and love,
As thou would'st join the blest above."

Still as he speaks, unwonted feeling
Is o'er the chieftain's bosom stealing;
Oh! not in vain the pleading cries
Of anxious thousands round him rise;
He yields—devotion's mingled sense
Of faith, and fear, and penitence,
Pervading all his soul, he bows
To offer on the cross his vows,
And that best incense to the skies,
Each evil passion's sacrifice.

Then tears from warriors' eyes were flowing
High hearts with soft emotions glowing;

Stern foes as long-loved brothers greeting,
And ardent throngs in transport meeting:
And eager footsteps forward pressing,
And accents loud in joyous blessing;
And when their first wild tumults cease,
A thousand voices echo "Peace!"

Twilight's dim mist hath roll'd away,
And the rich Orient burns with day:
Then as to greet the sunbeam's birth,
Rises the choral hymn of earth;
Th' exulting strain through Genoa swelling,
Of peace and holy rapture telling.

Far float the sounds o'er vale and steep,
The seaman hears them on the deep,
So mellow'd by the gale, they seem
As the wild music of a dream:
But not on mortal ear alone
Peals the triumphant anthem's tone;
For beings of a purer sphere
Bend with celestial joy, to hear.

THE TROUBADOUR,

AND

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

"Not only the place of Richard's confinement," (when thrown into prison by the Duke of Austria,) "if we believe the literary history of the times, but even the circumstance of his captivity, was carefully concealed by his vindictive enemies: and both might have remained unknown but for the grateful attachment of a Provençal bard, or minstrel, named Blondel, who had shared that prince's friendship and tasted his bounty. Having travelled over all the European continent to learn the destiny of his beloved patron, Blondel accidentally got intelligence of a certain castle in Germany, where a prisoner of distinction was confined, and guarded with great vigilance. Persuaded by a secret impulse that this prisoner was the King of England, the minstrel repaired to the place; but the gates of the castle were shut against him, and he could obtain no information relative to the name or quality of the unhappy person it secured. In this extremity, he bethought himself of an expedient for making the desired discovery. He chanted, with a loud voice, some verses of a song which had been composed partly by himself, partly by Richard; and to his unspeakable joy, on making a pause, he heard it re-echoed and continued by the royal captive.—(*Hist. Troubadours.*) To this discovery the English monarch is said to have eventually owed his release."——See Russell's *Modern Europe*, vol. i. p. 369.

The Troubadour o'er many a plain
Hath roam'd unwearied, but in vain:

O'er many a rugged mountain-scene,
And forest-wild, his track hath been;
Beneath Calabria's glowing sky
He hath sung the songs of chivalry;
His voice hath swell'd on the Alpine breeze,
And rung through the snowy Pyrenees:
From Ebro's banks to Danube's wave,
He hath sought his prince, the loved, the brave,
And yet, if still on earth thou art,
Oh, monarch of the lion-heart!
The faithful spirit, which distress
But heightens to devotedness,
By toil and trial vanquish'd not,
Shall guide thy minstrel to the spot.

He hath reach'd a mountain hung with vine,
And woods that wave o'er the lovely Rhine:
The feudal towers that crest its height
Frown in unconquerable might;
Dark is their aspect of sullen state —
No helmet hangs o'er the massy gate (1)
To bid the wearied pilgrim rest,
At the chieftain's board a welcome guest;
Vainly rich evening's parting smile
Would chase the gloom of the haughty pile,
That 'midst bright sunshine lowers on high,
Like a thunder-cloud in a summer sky.

Not these the halls where a child of song
Awhile may speed the hours along;
Their echoes should repeat alone
The tyrant's mandate, the prisoner's moan

Or the wild huntsman's bugle blast,
When his phantom-train are hurrying past. (2)
The weary minstrel paused—his eye
Roved o'er the scene despondingly:
Within the length'ning shadow, cast
By the fortress-towers and ramparts vast,
Lingering he gazed—the rocks around
Sublime in savage grandeur frown'd;
Proud guardians of the regal flood,
In giant strength the mountains stood;
By torrents cleft, by tempests riven,
Yet mingling still with the calm blue heaven.
Their peaks were bright with a sunny glow,
But the Rhine all shadowy roll'd below;
In purple tints the vineyards smiled,
But the woods beyond waved dark and wild;
Nor pastoral pipe, nor convent's bell,
Was heard on the sighing breeze to swell;
But all was lonely, silent, rude,
A stern, yet glorious solitude.

But hark! that solemn stillness breaking,
The Troubadour's wild song is waking.
Full oft that song, in days gone by,
Hath cheer'd the sons of chivalry;
It hath swell'd o'er Judah's mountains lone,
Hermon! thy echoes have learn'd its tone;
On the Great Plain (3) its notes have rung,
The leagued Crusaders' tents among;
'Twas loved by the Lion-heart, who won
The palm in the field of Ascalon;
And now afar o'er the rocks of Rhine
Peals the bold strain of Palestine.

THE TROUBADOUR'S SONG.

"Thine hour is come, and the stake is set,"
The Soldan cried to the captive knight,
"And the sons of the Prophet in throngs are met
To gaze on the fearful sight.

"But be our faith by thy lips profess'd,
The faith of Mecca's shrine,
Cast down the red-cross that marks thy vest,
And life shall yet be thine."

"I have seen the flow of my bosom's blood,
And gazed with undaunted eye;
I have borne the bright cross through fire and flood,
And think'st thou I fear to die?

"I have stood where thousands, by Salem's towers,
Have fall'n for the name divine;
And the faith that cheer'd *their* closing hours
Shall be the light of mine."

"Thus wilt thou die in the pride of health,
And the glow of youth's fresh bloom?
Thou art offer'd life, and pomp, and wealth,
Or torture and the tomb."

"I have been where the crown of thorns was twined
For a dying Saviour's brow;
He spurn'd the treasures that lure mankind,
And I reject them now!"

"Art thou the son of a noble line
In a land that is fair and blest?
And doth not thy spirit, proud captive! pine,
Again on its shores to rest?

'Thine own is the choice to hail once more
The soil of thy father's birth,
Or to sleep, when thy lingering pangs are o'er,
Forgotten in foreign earth."

"Oh! fair are the vine-clad hills that rise
In the country of my love;
But yet, though cloudless my native skies,
There's a brighter clime above!"

The bard hath paused—for another tone
Blends with the music of his own;
And his heart beats high with hope again,
As a well-known voice prolongs the strain.

"Are there none within thy father's hall,
Far o'er the wide blue main,
Young Christian! left to deplore thy fall,
With sorrow deep and vain?"

"There are hearts that still, through all the past,
Unchanging have loved me well;
There are eyes whose tears were streaming fast
When I bade my home farewell.

"Better they wept o'er the warrior's bier
Than th' apostate's living stain;
There's a land where those who loved when here,
Shall meet to love again."

'Tis he! thy prince—long sought, long lost,
The leader of the red-cross host!
'Tis he!—to none thy joy betray,
Young Troubadour! away, away!
Away to the island of the brave,
The gem on the bosom of the wave; (4)
Arouse the sons of the noble soil,
To win their Lion from the toil;
And free the wassail-cup shall flow,
Bright in each hall the hearth shall glow;
The festal board shall be richly crown'd,
While knights and chieftains revel round,
And a thousand harps with joy shall ring,
When merry England hails her king.

NOTES.

Note 1.

No helmet hangs o'er the massy gate.

It was a custom in feudal times to hang out a helmet on a castle, as a token that strangers were invited to enter, and partake of hospitality. So in the romance of "Perceforest," "ils fasoient mettre au plus hault de leur hostel un *heaulme*, en signe que tous les gentils hommes et gentilles femmes entrassent hardiment en leur hostel comme en leur propre."

Note 2.

Or the wild huntsman's bugle-blast,
When his phantom-train are hurrying past.

Popular tradition has made several mountains in Germany the haunt of the *wild Jäger*, or supernatural huntsman—the super-

stitious tales relating to the Unterberg are recorded in Eustace's *Classical Tour;* and it is still believed in the romantic district of the Odenwald, that the knight of Rodenstein, issuing from his ruined castle, announces the approach of war by traversing the air with a noisy armament to the opposite castle of Schnellerts. ——See the "*Manuel pour les Voyageurs sur le Rhin,*" and "*Autumn on the Rhine.*"

Note 3.

On the Great Plain its notes have rung.

The Plain of Esdraelon, called by way of eminence the "Great Plain;" in Scripture, and elsewhere, the "field of Megiddo," the "Galilæan Plain." This plain, the most fertile part of all the land of Canaan, has been the scene of many a memorable contest in the first ages of Jewish history, as well as during the Roman empire, the Crusades, and even in later times. It has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in this country, from the days of Nabuchodonosor, King of the Assyrians, until the disastrous march of Bonaparte from Egypt into Syria. Warriors out of "every nation which is under heaven" have pitched their tents upon the Plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld the various banners of their nations wet with the dews of Hermon and Thabôr. —— *Dr. Clarke's Travels.*

Note 4.

The gem on the bosom of the wave.

"This precious stone set in the silver sea."

Richard II.

THE

DEATH OF CONRADIN.

FROM SISMONDI'S "REPUBLIQUES ITALIENNES."

"La défaite de Conradin ne devoit mettre une terme ni à ses malheurs, ni aux vengeances du roi (Charles d'Anjou). L'amour du peuple pour l'héritier légitime du trône, avoit éclaté d'une manière effrayante; il pouvoit causer de nouvelles révolutions, si Conradin demeuroit en vie; et Charles, revêtant sa défiance et sa cruauté des formes de la justice, resolut de faire périr sur l'échafaud le dernier rejeton de la Maison de Souabe, l'unique espérance de son parti. Un seul juge provençal et sujet de Charles, dont les historiens n'ont pas voulu conserver le nom, osa voter pour la mort, d'autres se renfermèrent dans un timide et coupable silence; et Charles, sur l'autorité de ce seul juge, fit prononcer, par Robert de Bari, protonotaire du royaume, la sentence de mort contre Conradin et tous ses compagnons. Cette sentence fut communiquée à Conradin, comme il jouoit aux échecs; on lui laissa peu de temps pour se preparer à son exécution, et le 26 d'Octobre, il fut conduit, avec tous ses amis, sur la Place du Marché de Naples, le long du rivage de la mer. Charles étoit présent, avec toute sa cour, et une foule immense entouroit le roi vainqueur et le roi condamné. Conradin étoit entre les mains des bourreaux; il détacha lui-même son manteau, et s'étant mis à genoux pour prier, il se releva en s'écriant: 'Oh, ma mère, quelle profonde douleur te causera la nouvelle qu'on va te porter de moi!' Puis il tourna les yeux sur la foule qui l'entouroit; il vit les larmes, il entendit les sanglots de son peuple; alors, détachant son gant, il jeta au milieu de ses sujets ce gage d'un combat de vengeance, et rendit sa tête au bourreau. Après lui, sur le même echafaud, Charles fit trancher la tête au Duc d'Autriche, aux Comtes Gualferano et Bartolommeo Lancia,

et aux Comtes Gerard et Galvano Donoratico de Pise. Par un rafinement de cruauté, Charles voulut que le premier, fils du second, précédât son père, et mourût entre ses bras. Les cadavres, d'après ses ordres, furent exclus d'une terre sainte, et inhumés sans pompe sur le rivage de la mer. Charles II., cependant fit dans la suite, bâtir sur le même lieu une église de Carmelites, comme pour appaiser ces ombres irritées."

No cloud to dim the splendour of the day
Which breaks o'er Naples and her lovely bay,
And lights that brilliant sea and magic shore
With every tint that charm'd the great of yore;
Th' imperial ones of earth — who proudly bade
Their marble domes e'en Ocean's realm invade.

That race is gone — but glorious Nature here
Maintains unchanged her own sublime career,
And bids these regions of the sun display
Bright hues, surviving empires pass'd away.

The beam of Heaven expands — its kindling smile
Reveals each charm of many a fairy isle,
Whose image floats, in softer colouring drest,
With all its rocks and vines, on Ocean's breast.
Misenum's cape hath caught the vivid ray,
On Roman streamers there no more to play;
Still, as of old, unalterably bright,
Lovely it sleeps on Posilippo's height,
With all Italia's sunshine to illume
The ilex canopy of Virgil's tomb.
Campania's plains rejoice in light, and spread
Their gay luxuriance o'er the mighty dead;
Fair glittering to thine own transparent skies,
Thy palaces, exulting Naples! rise;

While, far on high, Vesuvius rears his peak,
Furrow'd and dark with many a lava streak.

Oh, ye bright shores of Circe and the Muse!
Rich with all Nature's and all fiction's hues;
Who shall explore your regions, and declare
The poet err'd to paint Elysium there?
Call up his spirit, wanderer! bid him guide
Thy steps, those siren-haunted seas beside;
And all the scene a lovelier light shall wear,
And spells more potent shall pervade the air.
What though his dust be scatter'd, and his urn
Long from its sanctuary of slumber torn, (1)
Still dwell the beings of his verse around,
Hovering in beauty o'er th' enchanted ground:
His lays are murmur'd in each breeze that roves
Soft o'er the sunny waves and orange-groves;
His memory's charm is spread o'er shore and sea,
The soul, the genius of Parthenope;
Shedding o'er myrtle shade and vine-clad hill
The purple radiance of Elysium still.

Yet that fair soil and calm resplendent sky
Have witness'd many a dark reality.
Oft o'er those bright blue seas the gale hath borne
The sighs of exiles never to return. (2)
There with the whisper of Campania's gale
Hath mingled oft affection's funeral-wail,
Mourning for buried heroes—while to her
That glowing land was but their sepulchre. (3)
And there of old the dread mysterious moan
Swell'd from strange voices of no mortal tone;

And that wild trumpet, whose unearthly note
Was heard, at midnight, o'er the hills to float
Around the spot where Agrippina died,
Denouncing vengeance on the matricide. (4)

Pass'd are those ages—yet another crime,
Another woe, must stain th' Elysian clime.
There stands a scaffold on the sunny shore—
It must be crimson'd ere the day is o'er!
There is a throne in regal pomp array'd,—
A scene of death from thence must be survey'd.
Mark'd ye the rushing throngs?—each mien is pale,
Each hurried glance reveals a fearful tale;
But the deep workings of th' indignant breast,
Wrath, hatred, pity, must be all suppress'd;
The burning tear awhile must check its course,
Th' avenging thought concentrate all its force;
For tyranny is near, and will not brook
Aught but submission in each guarded look.

Girt with his fierce Provençals, and with mien
Austere in triumph, gazing on the scene, (5)
And in his eye a keen suspicious glance
Of jealous pride and restless vigilance,
Behold the conqueror!—vainly in his face,
Of gentler feeling hope would seek a trace:
Cold, proud, severe, the spirit which hath lent
Its haughty stamp to each dark lineament;
And pleading Mercy, in the sternness there,
May read at once her sentence—to despair.

But thou, fair boy! the beautiful, the brave,
Thus passing from the dungeon to the grave,

While all is yet around thee which can give
A charm to earth, and make it bliss to live;
Thou on whose form hath dwelt a mother's eye,
Till the deep love that not with thee shall die
Hath grown too full for utterance—Can it be?
And is this pomp of death prepared for *thee?*
Young, royal Conradin! who shouldst have known
Of life as yet the sunny smile alone!
Oh! who can view thee, in the pride and bloom
Of youth, array'd so richly for the tomb,
Nor feel, deep swelling in his inmost soul,
Emotions tyranny may ne'er control?
Bright victim! to Ambition's altar led,
Crown'd with all flowers that heaven on earth can shed,
Who, from th' oppressor towering in his pride,
May hope for mercy—if to thee denied?
There is dead silence on the breathless throng,
Dead silence all the peopled shore along,
As on the captive moves—the only sound,
To break that calm so fearfully profound,
The low, sweet murmur of the rippling wave,
Soft as it glides, the smiling shore to lave;
While on that shore, his own fair heritage,
The youthful martyr to a tyrant's rage
Is passing to his fate: the eyes are dim
Which gaze, through tears that dare not flow, on him.
He mounts the scaffold—doth his footstep fail?
Doth his lip quiver? doth his cheek turn pale?
Oh! it may be forgiven him if a thought
Cling to that world, for him with beauty fraught,

To all the hopes that promised glory's meed,
And all th' affections that with him shall bleed!
If, in his life's young dayspring, while the rose
Of boyhood on his cheek yet freshly glows,
One human fear convulse his parting breath,
And shrink from all the bitterness of death!

But no! the spirit of his royal race
Sits brightly on his brow—that youthful face
Beams with heroic beauty, and his eye
Is eloquent with injured majesty.
He kneels—but not to man—his heart shall own
Such deep submission to his God alone!
And who can tell with what sustaining power
That God may visit him in fate's dread hour?
How the still voice, which answers every moan,
May speak of hope—when hope on earth is gone?

That solemn pause is o'er—the youth hath given
One glance of parting love to earth and heaven:
The sun rejoices in th' unclouded sky,
Life all around him glows—and he must die!
Yet 'midst his people, undismay'd, he throws
The gage of vengeance for a thousand woes;
Vengeance, that, like their own volcano's fire,
May sleep suppress'd a while—but not expire.
One softer image rises o'er his breast,
One fond regret, and all shall be at rest!
"Alas, for thee, my mother! who shall bear
To thy sad heart the tidings of despair,
When thy lost child is gone?"—that thought can thrill
His soul with pangs one moment more shall still.

The lifted axe is glittering in the sun—
It falls—the race of Conradin is run!
Yet, from the blood which flows that shore to stain,
A voice shall cry to heaven—and not in vain!
Gaze thou, triumphant from thy gorgeous throne,
In proud supremacy of guilt alone,
Charles of Anjou! but that dread voice shall be
A fearful summoner e'en yet to thee!

The scene of death is closed—the throngs depart,
A deep stern lesson graved on every heart.
No pomp, no funeral rites, no streaming eyes,
High-minded boy! may grace thine obsequies.
O, vainly royal and beloved! thy grave,
Unsanctified, is bathed by Ocean's wave;
Mark'd by no stone, a rude, neglected spot,
Unhonour'd, unadorn'd—but *unforgot;*
For thy deep wrongs in tameless hearts shall live,
Now mutely suffering—never to forgive!

The sunset fades from purple heavens away—
A bark hath anchor'd in th' unruffled bay;
Thence on the beach descends a female form,(6)
Her mien with hope and tearful transport warm;
But life hath left sad traces on her cheek,
And her soft eyes a chasten'd heart bespeak,
Inured to woes—yet what were all the past!
She sunk not feebly 'neath affliction's blast,
While one bright hope remain'd—who now shall tell
Th' uncrown'd, the widow'd, how her loved one fell?
To clasp her child, to ransom and to save,
The mother came—and she hath found his grave!

And by that grave, transfix'd in speechless grief,
Whose death-like trance denies a tear's relief,
Awhile she kneels—till roused at length to know,
To feel the might, the fulness of her woe,
On the still air a voice of anguish wild,
A mother's cry is heard—"My Conradin! my child."

NOTES.

Note 1.

Long from its sanctuary of slumber torn.

The urn, supposed to have contained the ashes of Virgil, has long since been lost.

Note 2.

The sighs of exiles, never to return.

Many Romans of exalted rank were formerly banished to some of the small islands in the Mediterranean, on the coast of Italy. Julia, the daughter of Augustus, was confined many years in the isle of Pandataria, and her daughter, Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus, afterwards died in exile on the same desolate spot.

Note 3.

That glowing land was but their sepulchre.

"Quelques souvenirs du cœur, quelques noms de femmes, réclament aussi vos pleurs. C'est à Misène, dans le lieu même où nous sommes, que la veuve de Pompée, Cornélie, conserva jusqu'à la mort son noble deuil; Agrippine pleura long-temps Germanicus sur ces bords. Un jour, le même assassin qui lui ravit son époux la trouva digne de le suivre. L'île de Nisida fut témoin des adieux de Brutus et de Porcie."—Madame de Stael—*Corinne.*

Note 4.

Denouncing vengeance on the matricide.

The sight of that coast, and those shores where the crime had been perpetrated, filled Nero with continual horrors; besides, there were some who imagined they heard horrid shrieks and cries from Agrippina's tomb, and a mournful sound of trumpets from the neighbouring cliffs and hills. Nero, therefore, flying from such tragical scenes, withdrew to Naples. —— *See Ancient Universal History.*

Note 5.

Austere in triumph, gazing on the scene.

"Ce Charles," dit Giovanni Villani, "fut sage et prudent dans les conseils, preux dans les armes, âpre et forte redouté de tous les rois du monde, magnanime et de hautes pensées qui l'égaloient aux plus grandes enterprises; inébranlable dans l'adversité, ferme et fidèle dans toutes ses promesses, parlant peu et agissant beaucoup, *ne riant presque jamais*, décent comme un religieux, zélé catholique, âpre à rendre justice, féroce dans ses regards. Sa taille étoit grande et nerveuse, sa couleur olivâtre, son nez fort grand. Il paroissoit plus fait qu'aucun autre chevalier pour la majesté royale. Il ne dormoit presque point. Jamais il ne prit de plaisir aux mimes, aux troubadours, et aux gens de cour." —— Sismondi, *Republiques Italiennes*, vol. iii.

Note 6.

Thence on the beach descends a female form.

"The Carmine (at Naples) calls to mind the bloody catastrophe of those royal youths, Conradin and Frederick of Austria, butchered before its door. Whenever I traversed that square, my heart yearned at the idea of their premature fate, and at the deep distress of Conradin's mother, who, landing on the beach with her son's ransom, found only a lifeless trunk to redeem from the fangs of his barbarous conqueror." —— Swinburne's *Travels in the Two Sicilies.*

THE

RESTORATION

OF THE

WORKS OF ART TO ITALY:

A POEM.

Italia, Italia! O tu cui feo la Sorte
Dono infelice di bellezza, onde hai
Funesta dote d'infiniti guai,
Che'n fronte scritti per gran doglia porte;
Deh, fossi tu men bella, o almen piu forte.
Filicaja.

"But the joy of discovery was short, and the triumph of taste transitory. The French, who in every invasion have been the scourge of Italy, and have rivalled or rather surpassed the rapacity of the Goths and Vandals, laid their sacrilegious hands on the unparalleled collection of the Vatican, tore its masterpieces from their pedestals, and dragging them from their temples of marble, transported them to Paris, and consigned them to the dull sullen halls, or rather stables, of the *Louvre*."——EUSTACE'S *Classical Tour through Italy*, vol. ii. p. 60.

RESTORATION OF THE WORKS OF ART TO ITALY.

Land of departed fame! whose classic plains
Have proudly echoed to immortal strains;
Whose hallow'd soil hath given the great and brave,
Day-stars of life, a birth-place and a grave;
Home of the arts! where glory's faded smile
Sheds lingering light o'er many a mouldering pile;
Proud wreck of vanish'd power, of splendour fled,
Majestic temple of the mighty dead!
Whose grandeur, yet contending with decay,
Gleams through the twilight of thy glorious day;
Though dimm'd thy brightness, riveted thy chain,
Yet, fallen Italy! rejoice again!
Lost, lovely realm! once more 't is thine to gaze
On the rich relics of sublimer days.

Awake, ye Muses of Etrurian shades,
Or sacred Tivoli's romantic glades;
Wake, ye that slumber in the bowery gloom;
Where the wild ivy shadows Virgil's tomb;
Or ye, whose voice, by Sorga's lonely wave,
Swell'd the deep echoes of the fountain's cave.
Or thrill'd the soul in Tasso's numbers high,
Those magic chains of love and chivalry;
If yet by classic streams ye fondly rove,
Haunting the myrtle-vale, the laurel grove;

Oh! rouse once more the daring soul of song,
Seize with bold hand the harp, forgot so long,
And hail, with wonted pride, those works revered,
Hallow'd by time, by absence more endear'd.

And breathe to those the strain, whose warrior-might,
Each danger stemm'd, prevail'd in every fight;
Souls of unyielding power, to storms inured,
Sublimed by peril, and by toil matured.
Sing of that leader, whose ascendant mind
Could rouse the slumbering spirit of mankind;
Whose banners track'd the vanquish'd Eagle's flight
O'er many a plain, and dark sierra's height;
Who bade once more the wild, heroic lay
Record the deeds of Roncesvalles' day;
Who, through each mountain-pass of rock and snow,
An Alpine huntsman, chased the fear-struck foe;
Waved his proud standard to the balmy gales,
Rich Languedoc! that fan thy glowing vales,
And 'mid those scenes renew'd th' achievements high,
Bequeath'd to fame by England's ancestry.

Yet, when the storm seem'd hush'd, the conflict past,
One strife remain'd—the mightiest and the last!
Nerved for the struggle, in that fateful hour,
Untamed Ambition summon'd all his power:
Vengeance and Pride, to phrenzy roused, were there,
And the stern might of resolute Despair.
Isle of the free! 'twas then thy champions stood,
Breasting unmoved the combat's wildest flood,
Sunbeam of Battle, then thy spirit shone,
Glow'd in each breast, and sunk with life alone.

Oh hearts devoted! whose illustrious doom
Gave there at once your triumph and your tomb,
Ye, firm and faithful, in th' ordeal tried
Of that dread strife, by Freedom sanctified;
Shrined, not entomb'd, ye rest in sacred earth,
Hallow'd by deeds of more than mortal worth.
What though to mark where sleeps heroic dust,
No sculptured trophy rise, or breathing bust,
Yours, on the scene where valour's race was run,
A prouder sepulchre—the field ye won!
There every mead, each cabin's lowly name,
Shall live a watch-word blended with your fame;
And well may flowers suffice those graves to crown,
That ask no urn to blazon their renown.
There shall the bard in future ages tread,
And bless each wreath that blossoms o'er the dead;
Revere each tree whose sheltering branches wave
O'er the low mounds, the altars of the brave:
Pause o'er each warrior's grass-grown bed, and hear
In every breeze, some name to glory dear,
And as the shades of twilight close around,
With martial pageants people all the ground.
Thither unborn descendants of the slain
Shall throng, as pilgrims to some holy fane,
While as they trace each spot, whose records tell
Where fought their fathers, and prevail'd, and fell,
Warm in their souls, shall loftiest feelings glow,
Claiming proud kindred with the dust below!
And many an age shall see the brave repair,
To learn the hero's bright devotion there.

And well, Ausonia! may that field of fame,
From thee one song of echoing triumph claim.

Land of the lyre! 'twas there the avenging sword
Won the bright treasures to thy fanes restored;
Those precious trophies o'er thy realms that throw
A veil of radiance, hiding half thy woe,
And bid the stranger for a while forget
How deep thy fall, and deem thee glorious yet.

Yes! fair creations, to perfection wrought,
Embodied visions of ascending thought!
Forms of sublimity! by Genius traced,
In tints that vindicate adoring taste;
Whose bright originals, to earth unknown,
Live in the spheres encircling Glory's throne;
Models of art, to deathless fame consign'd,
Stamp'd with the high-born majesty of mind;
Yes, matchless works! your presence shall restore
One beam of splendour to your native shore,
And her sad scenes of lost renown illume,
As the bright sunset gilds some hero's tomb.

Oh! ne'er, in other climes, though many an eye
Dwelt on your charms in beaming ecstasy;
Ne'er was it yours to bid the soul expand
With thoughts so mighty, dreams so boldly grand,
As in that realm, where each faint breeze's moan
Seems a low dirge for glorious ages gone;
Where 'mid the ruin'd shrines of many a vale,
E'en Desolation tells a haughty tale,
And scarce a fountain flows, a rock ascends,
But its proud name with song eternal blends!

Yes! in those scenes, where every ancient stream
Bids memory kindle o'er some lofty theme;

Where every marble deeds of fame records,
Each ruin tells of Earth's departed lords;
And the deep tones of inspiration swell,
From each wild olive-wood and Alpine dell;
Where heroes slumber, on their battle plains,
'Mid prostrate altars, and deserted fanes,
And Fancy communes in each lonely spot,
With shades of those who ne'er shall be forgot;
There was your home, and there your power imprest
With tenfold awe, the pilgrim's glowing breast;
And as the wind's deep thrills, and mystic sighs
Wake the wild harp to loftiest harmonies,
Thus at your influence, starting from repose,
Thought, Feeling, Fancy, into grandeur rose.

Fair Florence! Queen of Arno's lovely vale!
Justice and Truth indignant heard thy tale,
And sternly smiled in retribution's hour,
To wrest thy treasures from the Spoiler's power.
Too long the spirits of thy noble dead
Mourn'd o'er the domes they rear'd in ages fled,
Those classic scenes their pride so richly graced,
Temples of genius, palaces of taste,
Too long, with sad and desolated mien,
Reveal'd where conquest's lawless track had been;
Reft of each form with brighter life imbued,
Lonely they frown'd, a desert solitude.
Florence! th' Oppressor's noon of pride is o'er,
Rise in thy pomp again, and weep no more!

As one, who, starting at the dawn of day
From dark illusions, phantoms of dismay,
With transport heighten'd by those ills of night,
Hails the rich glories of expanding light;

E'en thus awakening from thy dreams of woe,
While Heaven's own hues in radiance round thee glow,
With warmer ecstasy 'tis thine to trace
Each tint of beauty, and each line of grace;
More bright, more prized, more precious, since deplored
As loved, lost relics, ne'er to be restored,
Thy grief as hopeless as the tear-drop shed
By fond affection bending o'er the dead.

Athens of Italy! once more are thine
Those matchless gems of art's exhaustless mine.
For thee bright Genius darts his living beam,
Warm o'er thy shrines the tints of Glory stream,
And forms august as natives of the sky,
Rise round each fane in faultless majesty,
So chastely perfect, so serenely grand,
They seem creations of no mortal hand.

Ye, at whose voice fair Art with eagle glance,
Burst in full splendour from her death-like trance;
Whose rallying call bade slumbering nations wake,
And daring Intellect his bondage break;
Beneath whose eye the Lords of song arose,
And snatch'd the Tuscan lyre from long repose;
And bade its pealing energies resound,
With power electric, through the realms around;
Oh! high in thought, magnificent in soul!
Born to inspire, enlighten, and control;
Cosmo, Lorenzo! view your reign once more,
The shrine where nations mingle to adore!
Again th' Enthusiast there, with ardent gaze,
Shall hail the mighty of departed days:

Those sovereign spirits, whose commanding mind
Seems in the marble's breathing mould enshrined,
Still, with ascendant power, the world to awe,
Still the deep homage of the heart to draw;
To breathe some spell of holiness around,
Bid all the scene be consecrated ground,
And from the stone, by inspiration wrought,
Dart the pure lightnings of exalted thought.

There, thou fair offspring of immortal mind!
Love's radiant Goddess, Idol of mankind!
Once the bright object of Devotion's vow,
Shalt claim from taste a kindred worship now.
Oh! who can tell what beams of heavenly light
Flash'd o'er the sculptor's intellectual sight,
How many a glimpse reveal'd to him alone,
Made brighter beings, nobler worlds his own:
Ere, like some vision sent the earth to bless,
Burst into life thy pomp of loveliness!

Young Genius there, while dwells his kindling eye
On forms, instinct with bright divinity,
While new-born powers, dilating in his heart,
Embrace the full magnificence of art;
From scenes by Raphael's gifted hand array'd;
From dreams of heaven, by Angelo portray'd;
From each fair work of Grecian skill sublime,
Seal'd with perfection, "sanctified by time;"
Shall catch a kindred glow, and proudly feel
His spirit burn with emulative zeal,
Buoyant with loftier hopes his soul shall rise,
Imbued, at once, with nobler energies;
O'er life's dim scenes on rapid pinion soar,
And worlds of visionary grace explore,

Till his bold hand give glory's day-dreams birth,
And with new wonders charm admiring earth.

Venice, exult! and o'er thy moonlit seas,
Swell with gay strains each Adriatic breeze!
What though long fled those years of martial fame,
That shed romantic lustre o'er thy name,
Though to the winds thy streamers idly play,
And the wild waves another Queen obey;
Though quench'd the spirit of thine ancient race,
And power and freedom scarce have left a trace;
Yet still shall Art her splendours round thee cast,
And gild the wreck of years for ever past.
Again thy fanes may boast a Titian's dyes,
Whose clear, soft brilliance emulates the skies,
And scenes that glow in colouring's richest bloom,
With life's warm flush Palladian halls illume.
From thy rich dome again the unrivall'd steed
Starts to existence, rushes into speed,
Still for Lysippus claims the wreath of fame,
Panting with ardour, vivified with flame.

Proud Racers of the Sun! to fancy's thought,
Burning with spirit, from his essence caught,
No mortal birth ye seem—but form'd to bear
Heaven's car of triumph through the realms of air;
To range uncurb'd the pathless fields of space,
The winds your rivals in the glorious race;
Traverse empyreal spheres with buoyant feet,
Free as the zephyr, as the shot star fleet;
And waft through worlds unknown the vital ray,
The flame that wakes creations into day.
Creatures of fire and ether! wing'd with light,
To track the regions of the Infinite!

From purer elements whose life was drawn,
Sprung from the sunbeam, offspring of the dawn,
What years on years, in silence gliding by,
Have spared those forms of perfect symmetry!
Moulded by Art to dignify alone
Her own bright deity's resplendent throne,
Since first her skill their fiery grace bestow'd,
Meet for such lofty fate, such high abode,
How many a race, whose tales of glory seem
An echo's voice—the music of a dream,
Whose records feebly from oblivion save
A few bright traces of the wise and brave;
How many a state, whose pillar'd strength sublime
Defied the storms of war, the waves of time,
Towering o'er earth majestic and alone,
Fortress of power—has flourish'd and is gone!
And they, from clime to clime by conquest borne,
Each fleeting triumph destined to adorn,
They, that of powers and kingdoms lost and won,
Have seen the noontide and the setting sun,
Consummate still in every grace remain,
As o'er *their* heads had ages roll'd in vain!
Ages, victorious, in their ceaseless flight,
O'er countless monuments of earthly might!
While she, from fair Byzantium's lost domain,
Who bore those treasures to her ocean-reign,
'Midst the blue deep, who rear'd her island throne,
And call'd th' infinitude of waves her own;
Venice the proud, the regent of the sea,
Welcomes in chains the trophies of the free!

And thou, whose Eagle's towering plume unfurl'd,
Once cast its shadow o'er a vassal world,

Eternal city! round whose Curule throne
The lords of nations knelt in ages flown;
Thou, whose Augustan years have left to time,
Immortal records of their glorious prime;
When deathless bards, thine olive-shades among,
Swell'd the high raptures of heroic song;
Fair, fallen Empress! raise thy languid head,
From the cold altars of th' illustrious dead,
And once again, with fond delight, survey
The proud memorials of thy noblest day.

Lo! where thy sons, oh Rome! a god-like train,
In imaged majesty return again!
Bards, chieftains, monarchs, tower with mien august
O'er scenes that shrine their venerable dust,
Those forms, those features, luminous with soul,
Still o'er thy children seem to claim control;
With awful grace arrest the pilgrim's glance,
Bind his rapt soul in elevating trance,
And bid the past, to fancy's ardent eyes,
From time's dim sepulchre in glory rise.

Souls of the lofty! whose undying names,
Rouse the young bosom still to noblest aims;
Oh! with your images could fate restore
Your own high spirit to your sons once more;
Patriots and heroes! could those flames return,
That bade your hearts with freedom's ardour burn,
Then from the sacred ashes of the first,
Might a new Rome in phœnix-grandeur burst!
With one bright glance dispel th' horizon's gloom,
With one loud call wake Empire from the tomb;
Bind round her brows her own triumphal crown,
Lift her dread Ægis with majestic frown,

Unchain her Eagle's wing, and guide his flight,
To bathe its plumage in the fount of light.

Vain dream! degraded Rome! thy noon is e'er,
Once lost, thy spirit shall revive no more.
It sleeps with those, the sons of other days,
Who fix'd on thee the world's adoring gaze;
Those, blest to live, while yet thy star was high,
More blest, ere darkness quench'd its beam, to die!

Yet, though thy faithless tutelary powers
Have fled thy shrines, left desolate thy towers,
Still, still to thee shall nations bend their way,
Revered in ruin, sovereign in decay!
Oh! what can realms, in fame's full zenith, boast,
To match the relics of thy splendour lost!
By Tiber's waves, on each illustrious hill,
Genius and taste shall love to wander still,
For there has Art survived an empire's doom,
And rear'd her throne o'er Latium's trophied tomb;
She from the dust recalls the brave and free,
Peopling each scene with beings worthy thee!

Oh! ne'er again may War, with lightning-stroke,
Rend its last honours from the shatter'd oak!
Long be those works, revered by ages, thine,
To lend one triumph to thy dim decline.

Bright with stern beauty, breathing wrathful fire,
In all the grandeur of celestial ire,
Once more thine own, th' immortal Archer's form
Sheds radiance round, with more than Being warm,
Oh! who could view, nor deem that perfect frame,
A living temple of ethereal flame?

Lord of the day-star! how may words portray
Of thy chaste glory one reflected ray?
Whate'er the soul could dream, the hand could trace,
Of regal dignity, and heavenly grace;
Each purer effluence of the fair and bright,
Whose fitful gleams have broke on mortal sight;
Each bold idea, borrow'd from the sky,
To vest th' embodied form of deity;
All, all in thee ennobled and refined,
Breathe and enchant, transcendently combined!
Son of Elysium! years and ages gone
Have bow'd in speechless homage at thy throne;
And days unborn, and nations yet to be,
Shall gaze, absorb'd in ecstasy, on thee!

And thou, triumphant wreck, (1) e'en yet sublime,
Disputed trophy, claim'd by Art and Time,
Hail to that scene again, where Genius caught
From thee its fervours of diviner thought!
Where He, th' inspired one, whose gigantic mind
Lived in some sphere, to him alone assign'd;
Who from the past, the future and th' unseen,
Could call up forms of more than earthly mien;
Unrivall'd Angelo on thee would gaze,
Till his full soul imbibed perfection's blaze!
And who but he, that Prince of Art, might dare
Thy sovereign greatness view without despair?
Emblem of Rome! from power's meridian hurl'd,
Yet claiming still the homage of the world.

What hadst thou been, ere barbarous hand defaced
The work of wonder, idolized by taste?
Oh! worthy still of some divine abode,
Mould of a conqueror! (2) ruin of a God!

Still, like some broken gem, whose quenchless beam
From each bright fragment pours its vital stream,
'Tis thine, by fate unconquer'd, to dispense
From every part, some ray of excellence!
E'en yet, inform'd with essence from on high,
Thine is no trace of frail mortality!
Within that frame a purer being glows,
Through viewless veins a brighter current flows;
Fill'd with immortal life, each muscle swells,
In every line supernal grandeur dwells.

Consummate work! the noblest and the last,
Of Grecian Freedom, (3) ere her reign was past:
Nurse of the mighty, she, while lingering still,
Her mantle flow'd o'er many a classic hill,
Ere yet her voice its parting accents breathed,
A Hero's image to the world bequeathed:
Enshrined in thee th' imperishable ray
Of high-soul'd Genius, foster'd by her sway,
And bade thee teach, to nations yet unborn,
What lofty dreams were hers—who never shall return!

And mark yon group, transfix'd with many a throe,
Seal'd with the image of eternal woe:
With fearful truth, terrific power, exprest,
Thy pangs, Laocoon, agonize the breast,
And the stern combat picture to mankind,
Of suffering nature, and enduring mind.
Oh, mighty conflict! though his pains intense
Distend each nerve, and dart through every sense;
Though fix'd on him, his children's suppliant eyes
Implore the aid avenging fate denies;
Though, with the giant-snake in fruitless strife
Heaves every muscle with convulsive life,

And in each limb Existence writhes, enroll'd
'Mid the dread circles of the venom'd fold;
Yet the strong spirit lives—and not a cry
Shall own the might of Nature's agony!
That furrow'd brow unconquer'd soul reveals,
That patient eye to angry heaven appeals,
That struggling bosom concentrates its breath,
Nor yields one moan to torture or to death! (4)

Sublimest triumph of intrepid Art!
With speechless horror to congeal the heart,
To freeze each pulse, and dart through every vein
Cold thrills of fear, keen sympathies of pain;
Yet teach the spirit how its lofty power
May brave the pangs of fate's severest hour.

Turn from such conflicts, and enraptured gaze
On scenes where Painting all her skill displays:
Landscapes, by colouring drest in richer dyes,
More mellow'd sunshine, more unclouded skies;
Or dreams of bliss, to dying martyrs given,
Descending Seraphs robed in beams of heaven.

Oh! sovereign Masters of the pencil's might,
Its depth of shadow, and its blaze of light,
Ye, whose bold thought, disdaining every bound,
Explored the worlds above, below, around,
Children of Italy! who stand alone,
And unapproach'd, 'midst regions all your own;
What scenes, what beings, blest your favour'd sight,
Severely grand, unutterably bright!
Triumphant spirits! your exulting eye
Could meet the noontide of eternity,

And gaze untired, undaunted, uncontroll'd,
On all that Fancy trembles to behold.

Bright on your view such forms their splendour shed,
As burst on Prophet-bards in ages fled:
Forms that to trace, no hand but yours might dare
Darkly sublime, or exquisitely fair;
These o'er the walls your magic skill array'd,
Glow in rich sunshine, gleam through melting shade,
Float in light grace, in awful greatness tower,
And breathe and move, the records of your power.
Inspired of Heaven! what heighten'd pomp ye cast
O'er all the deathless trophies of the past!
Round many a marble fane and classic dome,
Asserting still the majesty of Rome:
Round many a work that bids the world believe
What Grecian Art could image and achieve;
Again, creative minds, your visions throw
Life's chasten'd warmth, and Beauty's mellowest glow,
And when the morn's bright beams and mantling dyes
Pour the rich lustre of Ausonian skies,
Or evening suns illume, with purple smile,
The Parian altar, and the pillar'd aisle,
Then, as the full, or soften'd radiance falls,
On Angel-groups that hover o'er the walls,
Well may those Temples, where your hand has shed
Light o'er the tomb, existence round the dead,
Seem like some world, so perfect and so fair,
That naught of earth should find admittance there,
Some sphere, where Beings, to mankind unknown,
Dwell in the brightness of their pomp alone!

Hence, ye vain fictions, fancy's erring theme,
Gods of illusion! phantoms of a dream!
Frail, powerless idols of departed time,
Fables of song, delusive, though sublime!
To loftier tasks has Roman Art assign'd
Her matchless pencil, and her mighty mind!
From brighter streams her vast ideas flow'd,
With purer fire her ardent spirit glow'd.
To her 'twas given in fancy to explore
The land of miracles, the holiest shore!
That realm where first the light of life was sent,
The loved, the punish'd, of th' Omnipotent!
O'er Judah's hills her thoughts inspired would stray,
Through Jordan's valleys trace their lonely way;
By Siloa's brook, or Almotana's (5) deep,
Chain'd in dead silence, and unbroken sleep;
Scenes whose cleft rocks and blasted deserts tell
Where pass'd th' Eternal, where his anger fell!
Where oft his voice the words of fate reveal'd,
Swell'd in the whirlwind, in the thunder peal'd,
Or heard by prophets in some palmy vale,
Breathed 'still small' whispers on the midnight gale.
There dwelt her spirit—there her hand portray'd
'Mid the lone wilderness or cedar-shade,
Ethereal forms, with awful missions fraught,
Or Patriarch-seers, absorb'd in sacred thought,
Bards, in high converse with the world at rest,
Saints of the earth, and spirits of the blest.
But chief to Him, the conqueror of the grave,
Who lived to guide us, and who died to save;
Him at whose glance the powers of evil fled,
And soul return'd to animate the dead;

Whom the waves own'd—and sunk beneath his eye,
Awed by one accent of divinity;
To Him she gave her meditative hours,
Hallow'd her thoughts, and sanctified her powers.
O'er her bright scenes sublime repose she threw,
As all around the Godhead's presence knew,
And robed the Holy One's benignant mien
In beaming mercy, majesty serene.

Oh! mark, where Raphael's pure and perfect line
Portrays that form ineffably divine! (6)
Where with transcendent skill his hand has shed
Diffusive sunbeams round the Saviour's head;
Each heaven-illumined lineament imbued
With all the fulness of beatitude,
And traced the sainted group, whose mortal sight
Sinks overpower'd by th' excess of light!

Gaze on that scene, and own the might of Art,
By truth inspired to elevate the heart!
To bid the soul exultingly possess,
Of all her powers a heighten'd consciousness,
And strong in hope, anticipate the day,
The last of life, the first of freedom's ray;
To realize, in some unclouded sphere,
Those pictured glories feebly imaged here!
Dim, cold, reflection from her native sky,
Faint effluence of "the Day-spring from on high!"

NOTES.

Note 1.

The Belvidere Torso, the favourite study of Michael Angelo, and of many other distinguished artists.

Note 2.

"Quoique cette statue d'Hercule ait été maltraitée et mutilée d'une manière étrange, se trouvant sans tête, sans bras, et sans jambes, elle est cependant encore un chef-d'œuvre aux yeux des connoisseurs; et ceux qui savent percer dans les mystères de l'art, se la représentent dans toute sa beauté. L'artiste, en voulant représenter Hercule, a formé un corps idéal au-dessus de la nature. * * * Cet Hercule paroît donc ici tel qu'il dut être, lorsque, purifié par le feu des foiblesses de l'humanité, il obtint l'immortalité, et pris place auprès des dieux. Il est représenté sans aucun besoin de nourriture et de réparation de forces. Les veines y sont toutes invisibles."—*Winckelmann*, *Histoire de l'Art chez les Anciens*, tom. ii. p. 248.

Note 3.

"Le Torso d'Hercule paroît un des derniers ouvrages parfaits que l'art ait produit en Grèce, avant la perte de sa liberté. Car après que la Grèce fut réduite en province Romaine, l'histoire ne fait mention d'aucun artiste célèbre de cette nation, jusqu'aux temps du Triumvirat Romain."—*Winckelmann*, *ibid.* tom. ii. p. 250.

Note 4.

"It is not, in the same manner, in the agonized limbs, or in the convulsed muscles of the Laocoon, that the secret grace of its composition resides; it is in the majestic air of the head, which

has not *yielded* to *suffering*, and in the deep serenity of the forehead, which seems to be still *superior* to all its *afflictions*, and significant of a mind that cannot be subdued."—*Allison's Essays*, vol. ii. p. 400.

"Laocoon nous offre le spectacle de la nature humaine dans la plus grande douleur dont elle soit susceptible, sous l'image d'homme qui tache de rassembler contre elle toute la force de l'esprit. Tandis que l'excès de la souffrance enfle les muscles, et tire violemment les nerfs, le courage se montre sur le front gonflé: la poitrine s'élève avec peine par la nécessité de la respiration, qui est également contrainte par le silence que la force de l'âme impose à la douleur qu'elle voudrait étouffer. * * * Son air est plaintif, et non criard."—*Winckelmann, ibid.* tom. ii. p. 214.

Note 5.

Almotana. The name given by the Arabs to the Dead Sea.

Note 6.

The Transfiguration, thought to be so perfect a specimen of art, that, in honour of Raphael, it was carried before his body to the grave.

MODERN GREECE.

Greece! thou sapient nurse of finer arts,
Which to bright Science blooming Fancy bore,
Be this thy praise, that thou, and thou alone,
In these hast led the way, in these excell'd,
Crown'd with the laurel of assenting Time.

THOMSON'S *Liberty.*

MODERN GREECE.

I.

O! who hath trod thy consecrated clime,
Fair land of Phidias! theme of lofty strains!
And traced each scene, that, 'midst the wrecks of time,
The print of Glory's parting step retains;
Nor for awhile, in high-wrought dreams, forgot,
Musing on years gone by in brightness there,
The hopes, the fears, the sorrows of his lot,
The hues his fate hath worn, or yet may wear;
As when, from mountain-heights, his ardent eye
Of sea and heaven hath track'd the blue infinity?

II.

Is there who views with cold unalter'd mien,
His frozen heart with proud indifference fraught,
Each sacred haunt, each unforgotten scene,
Where Freedom triumph'd, or where Wisdom taught?
Souls that too deeply feel, oh, envy not
The sullen calm your fate hath never known:
Through the dull twilight of that wint'ry lot
Genius ne'er pierced, nor Fancy's sunbeam shone,
Nor those high thoughts, that, hailing Glory's trace,
Glow with the generous flames of every age and race.

III.

But blest the wanderer, whose enthusiast mind
Each muse of ancient days hath deep imbued
With lofty lore; and all his thoughts refined
In the calm school of silent solitude;
Pour'd on his ear, 'midst groves and glens retired,
The mighty strains of each illustrious clime,
All that hath lived, while empires have expired,
To float for ever on the winds of Time;
And on his soul indelibly portray'd
Fair visionary forms, to fill each classic shade.

IV.

Is not his mind, to meaner thoughts unknown,
A sanctuary of beauty and of light?
There he may dwell in regions all his own,
A world of dreams, where all is pure and bright.
For him the scenes of old renown possess
Romantic charms, all veil'd from other eyes;
There every form of nature's loveliness
Wakes in his breast a thousand sympathies;
As music's voice, in some lone mountain-dell,
From rocks and caves around calls forth each echo's swell.

V.

For him Italia's brilliant skies illume
The bard's lone haunts, the warrior's combat-plains,
And the wild rose yet lives to breathe and bloom
Round Doric Pæstum's solitary fanes. (1)
But most, fair Greece! on thy majestic shore
He feels the fervours of his spirit rise;

Thou birth-place of the Muse! whose voice of yore
Breathed in thy groves immortal harmonies;
And lingers still around the well-known coast,
Murmuring a wild farewell to fame and freedom lost.

VI.

By seas, that flow in brightness as they lave
Thy rocks, th' enthusiast rapt in thought may stray,
While roves his eye o'er that deserted wave,
Once the proud scene of battle's dread array.
—O ye blue waters! ye, of old that bore
The free, the conquering, hymn'd by choral strains,
How sleep ye now around the silent shore,
The lonely realm of ruins and of chains!
How are the mighty vanish'd in their pride!
E'en as their barks have left no traces on your tide.

VII.

Hush'd are the Pæans whose exulting tone
Swell'd o'er that tide (2)—the sons of battle sleep—
The wind's wild sigh, the halcyon's voice alone
Blend with the plaintive murmur of the deep.
Yet when those waves have caught the splendid hues
Of morn's rich firmament, serenely bright,
Or setting suns the lovely shore suffuse
With all their purple mellowness of light,
O! who could view the scene, so calmly fair,
Nor dream that peace, and joy, and liberty, were there?

VIII.

Where soft the sunbeams play, the zephyrs blow,
'Tis hard to deem that misery can be nigh;
Where the clear heavens in blue transparence glow,
Life should be calm and cloudless as the sky;
—Yet o'er the low, dark dwellings of the dead,
Verdure and flowers in summer-bloom may smile,
And ivy-boughs their graceful drapery spread
In green luxuriance o'er the ruin'd pile;
And mantling woodbine veil the wither'd tree,—
And thus it is, fair land! forsaken Greece, with thee.

IX.

For all the loveliness, and light, and bloom,
That yet are thine, surviving many a storm,
Are but as heaven's warm radiance on the tomb,
The rose's blush that masks the canker-worm:—
And thou art desolate — thy morn hath pass'd
So dazzling in the splendour of its way,
That the dark shades the night hath o'er thee cast
Throw tenfold gloom around thy deep decay.
Once proud in freedom, still in ruin fair,
Thy fate hath been unmatch'd—in glory and despair

X.

For thee, lost land! the hero's blood hath flow'd
The high in soul have brightly lived and died;
For thee the light of soaring genius glow'd
O'er the fair arts it form'd and glorified.

Thine were the minds, whose energies sublime
So distanced ages in their lightning-race,
The task they left the sons of later time
Was but to follow their illumined trace.
—Now, bow'd to earth, thy children, to be free,
Must break each link that binds their filial hearts to thee.

XI.

Lo! to the scenes of fiction's wildest tales,
Her own bright East, thy son, Morea! flies, (3)
To seek repose 'midst rich, romantic vales,
Whose incense mounts to Asia's vivid skies.
There shall he rest?—Alas! his hopes in vain
Guide to the sun-clad regions of the palm,
Peace dwells not now on oriental plain,
Though earth is fruitfulness, and air is balm;
And the sad wanderer finds but lawless foes,
Where patriarchs reign'd of old, in pastoral repose.

XII.

Where Syria's mountains rise, or Yemen's groves,
Or Tigris rolls his genii-haunted wave,
Life to his eye, as wearily it roves,
Wears but two forms—the tyrant and the slave!
There the fierce Arab leads his daring horde,
Where sweeps the sand-storm o'er the burning wild;
There stern Oppression waves the wasting sword
O'er plains that smile, as ancient Eden smiled;
And the vale's bosom, and the desert's gloom,
Yield to the injured there no shelter save the tomb.

XIII.

But thou, fair world! whose fresh unsullied charms
Welcomed Columbus from the western wave,
Wilt thou receive the wanderer to thine arms, (4)
The lost descendant of the immortal brave?
Amidst the wild magnificence of shades
That o'er thy floods their twilight-grandeur cast,
In the green depth of thine untrodden glades
Shall he not rear his bower of peace at last?
Yes! thou hast many a lone, majestic scene,
Shrined in primeval woods, where despot ne'er hath been.

XIV.

There, by some lake, whose blue expansive breast
Bright from afar, an inland-ocean, gleams,
Girt with vast solitudes, profusely dress'd
In tints like those that float o'er poet's dreams;
Or where some flood from pine-clad mountain pours
Its might of waters, glittering in their foam,
'Midst the rich verdure of its wooded shores,
The exiled Greek hath fix'd his sylvan home:
So deeply lone, that round the wild retreat
Scarce have the paths been trod by Indian huntsman's feet.

XV.

The forests are around him in their pride,
The green savannas, and the mighty waves;
And isles of flowers, bright-floating o'er the tide, (5)
That images the fairy worlds it laves,

And stillness, and luxuriance—o'er his head
The ancient cedars wave their peopled bowers,
On high the palms their graceful foliage spread,
Cinctured with roses the magnolia towers,
And from those green arcades a thousand tones
Wake with each breeze, whose voice through Nature's temple moans.

XVI.

And there, no traces left by brighter days,
For glory lost may wake a sigh of grief,
Some grassy mound, perchance, may meet his gaze,
The lone memorial of an Indian chief.
There man not yet hath mark'd the boundless plain
With marble records of his fame and power;
The forest is his everlasting fane,
The palm his monument, the rock his tower.
Th' eternal torrent and the giant tree,
Remind him but that they, like him, are wildly free.

XVII.

But doth the exile's heart serenely there
In sunshine dwell?—Ah! when was exile blest?
When did bright scenes, clear heavens, or summer air,
Chase from his soul the fever of unrest?
—There is a heart-sick weariness of mood,
That like slow poison wastes the vital glow,
And shrines itself in mental solitude,
An uncomplaining and a nameless woe,
That coldly smiles 'midst pleasure's brightest ray,
As the chill glacier's peak reflects the flush of day.

XVIII.

Such grief is theirs, who, fix'd on foreign shore,
Sigh for the spirit of their native gales,
As pines the seaman, 'midst the ocean's roar,
For the green earth, with all its woods and vales.
Thus feels thy child, whose memory dwells with thee,
Loved Greece! all sunk and blighted as thou art.
Though thought and step in western wilds be free,
Yet thine are still the daydreams of his heart:
The deserts spread between, the billows foam,
Thou, distant and in chains, art yet his spirit's home.

XIX.

In vain for him the gay liannes entwine,
Or the green fire-fly sparkles through the brakes,
Or summer-winds waft odours from the pine,
As eve's last blush is dying on the lakes.
Through thy fair vales his fancy roves the while,
Or breathes the freshness of Cithæron's height,
Or dreams how softly Athens' towers would smile,
Or Sunium's ruins, in the fading light;
On Corinth's cliff what sunset hues may sleep,
Or, at that placid hour, how calm th' Egean deep!

XX.

What scenes, what sunbeams, are to him like thine?
(The all of thine no tyrant could destroy!)
E'en to the stranger's roving eye, they shine
Soft as a vision of remember'd joy.

And he who comes, the pilgrim of a day,
A passing wanderer o'er each Attic hill,
Sighs as his footsteps turn from thy decay,
To laughing climes, where all is splendour still;
And views with fond regret thy lessening shore,
As he would watch a star that sets to rise no more.

XXI.

Realm of sad beauty! thou art as a shrine
That Fancy visits with Devotion's zeal,
To catch high thoughts and impulses divine,
And all the glow of soul enthusiasts feel
Amidst the tombs of heroes—for the brave
Whose dust, so many an age, hath been thy soil,
Foremost in honour's phalanx, died to save
The land redeem'd and hallow'd by their toil;
And there is language in thy lightest gale,
That o'er the plains they won seems murmuring yet their tale.

XXII.

And he, whose heart is weary of the strife
Of meaner spirits, and whose mental gaze
Would shun the dull cold littleness of life,
Awhile to dwell amidst sublimer days,
Must turn to thee, whose every valley teems
With proud remembrances that cannot die.
Thy glens are peopled with inspiring dreams,
Thy winds, the voice of oracles gone by;
And, 'midst thy laurel shades the wanderer hears
The sound of mighty names, the hymns of vanish'd years.

XXIII.

Through that deep solitude be his to stray,
By Faun and Orcad loved in ages past,
Where clear Peneus winds his rapid way
Through the cleft heights, in antique grandeur vast
Romantic Temple! thou art yet the same—
Wild, as when sung by bards of elder time: (6)
Years, that have changed thy river's classic name,(7)
Have left thee still in savage pomp sublime;
And from thine Alpine clefts, and marble caves,
In living lustre still break forth the fountain waves.

XXIV.

Beneath thy mountain battlements and towers,
Where the rich arbute's coral-berries glow, (8)
Or, 'midst th' exuberance of thy forest bowers,
Casting deep shadows o'er the current's flow,
Oft shall the pilgrim pause, in lone recess,
As rock and stream some glancing light have caught,
And gaze, till Nature's mighty forms impress
His soul with deep sublimity of thought;
And linger oft, recalling many a tale,
That breeze, and wave, and wood, seem whispering through thy dale.

XXV.

He, thought-entranced, may wander where of old
From Delphi's chasm the mystic vapour rose,
And trembling nations heard their doom foretold
By the dread spirit throned 'midst rocks and snows.

Though its rich fanes be blended with the dust,
And silence now the hallow'd haunt possess,
Still is the scene of ancient rites august,
Magnificent in mountain loneliness;
Still Inspiration hovers o'er the ground,
Where Greece her councils held, (9) her Pythian victors crown'd.

XXVI.

Or let his steps the rude grey cliffs explore
Of that wild pass, once dyed with Spartan blood,
When by the waves that break on Œta's shore,
The few, the fearless, the devoted, stood!
Or rove where, shadowing Mantinea's plain,
Bloom the wild laurels o'er the warlike dead, (10)
Or lone Platæa's ruins yet remain,
To mark the battle-field of ages fled;
Still o'er such scenes presides a sacred power,
Though Fiction's gods have fled from fountain, grot, and bower.

XXVII.

Oh! still unblamed may fancy fondly deem,
That, lingering yet, benignant genii dwell
Where mortal worth has hallow'd grove or stream
To sway the heart with some ennobling spell;
For mightiest minds have felt their blest control,
In the wood's murmur, in the zephyr's sigh,
And these are dreams that lend a voice and soul
And a high power, to Nature's majesty!
And who can rove o'er Grecian shores, nor feel,
Soft o'er his inmost heart, their secret magic steal?

XXVIII.

Yet many a sad reality is there,
That Fancy's bright illusions cannot veil.
Pure laughs the light, and balmy breathes the air,
But Slavery's mien will tell its bitter tale;
And there, not Peace, but Desolation, throws
Delusive quiet o'er full many a scene,
Deep as the brooding torpor of repose
That follows where the earthquake's track hath been;
Or solemn calm, on Ocean's breast that lies,
When sinks the storm, and death has hush'd the seaman's cries.

XXIX.

Hast thou beheld some sov'reign spirit, hurl'd
By Fate's rude tempest from its radiant sphere,
Doom'd to resign the homage of a world,
For Pity's deepest sigh, and saddest tear?
Oh! hast thou watch'd the awful wreck of mind,
That weareth still a glory in decay?
Seen all that dazzles and delights mankind—
Thought, science, genius, to the storm a prey,
And o'er the blasted tree, the wither'd ground,
Despair's wild nightshade spread, and darkly flourish round?

XXX.

So mayst thou gaze, in sad and awe-struck thought,
On the deep fall of that yet lovely clime:
Such there the ruin Time and Fate have wrought,
So changed the bright, the splendid, the sublime;

There the proud monuments of Valour's name,
The mighty works Ambition piled on high,
The rich remains by Art bequeath'd to Fame —
Grace, beauty, grandeur, strength, and symmetry,
Blend in decay; while all that yet is fair
Seems only spared to tell how much hath perish'd there!

XXXI.

There, while around lie mingling in the dust,
The column's graceful shaft, with weeds o'ergrown,
The mouldering torso, the forgotten bust,
The warrior's urn, the altar's mossy stone;
Amidst the loneliness of shatter'd fanes,
Still matchless monuments of other years,
O'er cypress groves, or solitary plains,
Its eastern form the minaret proudly rears;
As on some captive city's ruin'd wall
The victor's banner waves, exulting o'er its fall.

XXXII.

Still, where that column of the mosque aspires,
Landmark of slavery, towering o'er the waste,
There science droops, the Muses hush their lyres,
And o'er the blooms of fancy and of taste
Spreads the chill blight — as in that orient isle,
Where the dark upas taints the gale around, (11)
Within its precincts not a flower may smile,
Nor dew nor sunshine fertilize the ground;
Nor wild birds' music float on zephyr's breath,
But all is silence round, and solitude, and death.

XXXIII.

Far other influence pour'd the Crescent's light
O'er conquer'd realms, in ages pass'd away;
Full and alone it beam'd, intensely bright,
While distant climes in midnight darkness lay.
Then rose th' Alhambra, with its founts and shades,
Fair marble halls, alcoves, and orange bowers:
Its sculptured lions, (12) richly wrought arcades,
Aerial pillars, and enchanted towers;
Light, splendid, wild, as some Arabian tale
Would picture fairy domes, that fleet before the gale.

XXXIV.

Then foster'd genius lent each caliph's throne
Lustre barbaric pomp could ne'er attain;
And stars unnumber'd o'er the orient shone,
Bright as that Pleiad, sphered in Mecca's fane. (13)
From Bagdat's palaces the choral strains
Rose and re-echoed to the desert's bound,
And Science, woo'd on Egypt's burning plains,
Rear'd her majestic head with glory crown'd;
And the wild Muses breathed romantic lore,
From Syria's palmy groves to Andalusia's shore.

XXXV.

Those years have past in radiance—they have past,
As sinks the day-star in the tropic main;
His parting beams no soft reflection cast,
They burn—are quench'd—and deepest shadows
reign.

And Fame and Science have not left a trace
In the vast regions of the Moslem's power,—
Regions, to intellect a desert space,
A wild without a fountain or a flower,
Where towers Oppression 'midst the deepening glooms,
As dark and lone ascends the cypress 'midst the tombs.

XXXVI.

Alas for thee, fair Greece! when Asia pour'd
Her fierce fanatics to Byzantium's wall,
When Europe sheath'd, in apathy, her sword,
And heard unmoved the fated city's call,
No bold crusaders ranged their serried line
Of spears and banners round a falling throne;
And thou, O last and noblest Constantine! (14)
Didst meet the storm unshrinking and alone.
Oh! blest to die in freedom, though in vain,
Thine Empire's proud exchange the grave, and not the chain.

XXXVII.

Hush'd is Byzantium—'tis the dead of night—
The closing night of that imperial race! (15)
And all is vigil—but the eye of light
Shall soon unfold, a wilder scene to trace:
There is a murmuring stillness on the train,
Thronging the midnight streets, at morn to die;
And to the cross, in fair Sophia's fane,
For the last time is raised Devotion's eye;
And, in his heart while faith's bright visions rise,
There kneels the high-soul'd prince, the summon'd of the skies.

XXXVIII.

Day breaks in light and glory—'tis the hour
Of conflict and of fate—the war-note calls—
Despair hath lent a stern, delirious power
To the brave few that guard the rampart walls.
Far o'er Marmora's waves th' artillery's peal
Proclaims an empire's doom in every note;
Tambour and trumpet swell the clash of steel,
Round spire and dome the clouds of battle float;
From camp and wave rush on the crescent's host,
And the Seven Towers (16) are scaled, and all is won and lost.

XXXIX.

Then, Greece! the tempest rose that burst on thee,
Land of the bard, the warrior, and the sage!
Oh! where were then thy sons, the great, the free,
Whose deeds are guiding stars from age to age?
Though firm thy battlements of crags and snows,
And bright the memory of thy days of pride,
In mountain might though Corinth's fortress rose,
On, unresisted, roll'd th' invading tide!
Oh! vain the rock, the rampart, and the tower,
If Freedom guard them not with Mind's unconquer'd power.

XL.

Where were th' avengers then, whose viewless might
Preserved inviolate their awful fane, (17)
When through the steep defiles, to Delphi's height,
In martial splendour pour'd the Persian's train?

Then did those mighty and mysterious Powers,
Arm'd with the elements, to vengeance wake,
Call the dread storms to darken round their towers,
Hurl down the rocks, and bid the thunders break;
Till far around, with deep and fearful clang,
Sounds of unearthly war through wild Parnassus rang.

XLI.

Where was the spirit of the victor-throng
Whose tombs are glorious by Scamander's tide,
Whose names are bright in everlasting song,
The lords of war, the praised, the deified?
Where he, the hero of a thousand lays,
Who from the dead at Marathon arose (18)
All arm'd; and beaming on the Athenian's gaze,
A battle-meteor, guided to their foes?
Or they whose forms to Alaric's awe-struck eye, (19)
Hovering o'er Athens, blazed, in airy panoply?

XLII.

Ye slept, oh heroes! chief ones of the earth! (20)
High demigods of ancient days! ye slept.
There lived no spark of your ascendant worth
When o'er your land the victor Moslem swept;
No patriot then the sons of freedom led,
In mountain pass devotedly to die;
The martyr-spirit of resolve was fled,
And the high soul's unconquer'd buoyancy;
And by your graves, and on your battle-plains,
Warriors! your children knelt, to wear the stranger's chains.

XLIII.

Now have your trophies vanish'd, and your homes
Are moulder'd from the earth, while scarce remain
E'en the faint traces of the ancient tombs
That mark where sleep the slayers or the slain.
Your deeds are with the days of glory flown,
The lyres are hush'd that swell'd your fame afar,
The halls that echo'd to their sounds are gone,
Perish'd the conquering weapons of your war; (21)
And if a mossy stone your names retain,
'Tis but to tell your sons, for them ye died in vain.

XLIV.

Yet, where some lone sepulchral relic stands,
That with those names tradition hallows yet,
Oft shall the wandering son of other lands
Linger in solemn thought and hush'd regret.
And still have legends mark'd the lonely spot
Where low the dust of Agamemnon lies;
And shades of kings and leaders unforgot,
Hovering around, to fancy's vision rise.
Souls of the heroes! seek your rest again,
Nor mark how changed the realms that saw your glory's reign.

XLV.

Lo, where th' Albanian spreads his despot sway
O'er Thessaly's rich vales and glowing plains,
Whose sons in sullen abjectness obey,
Nor lift the hand indignant at its chains:

Oh! doth the land that gave Achilles birth,
And many a chief of old illustrious line,
Yield not one spirit of unconquer'd worth
To kindle those that now in bondage pine?
No! on its mountain-air is slavery's breath,
And terror chills the hearts whose utter'd plaints were death.

XLVI.

Yet if thy light, fair Freedom, rested there,
How rich in charms were that romantic clime,
With streams, and woods, and pastoral valleys fair,
And wall'd with mountains, haughtily sublime.
Heights, that might well be deem'd the Muses' reign,
Since, claiming proud alliance with the skies,
They lose in loftier spheres their wild domain;
Meet home for those retired divinities
That love, where nought of earth may e'er intrude,
Brightly to dwell on high, in lonely sanctitude.

XLVII.

There, in rude grandeur, daringly ascends
Stern Pindus, rearing many a pine-clad height;
He with the clouds his bleak dominion blends,
Frowning o'er vales, in woodland verdure bright.
Wild and august in consecrated pride,
There through the deep-blue heaven Olympus towers,
Girdled with mists, light-floating as to hide
The rock-built palace of immortal powers;

Where far on high the sunbeam finds repose,
Amidst th' eternal pomp of forests and of snows.

XLVIII.

Those savage cliffs and solitudes might seem
The chosen haunts where Freedom's foot would roam;
She loves to dwell by glen and torrent-stream,
And make the rocky fastnesses her home.
And in the rushing of the mountain-flood,
In the wild eagle's solitary cry,
In sweeping winds that peal through cave and wood,
There is a voice of stern sublimity,
That swells her spirit to a loftier mood
Of solemn joy severe, of power, of fortitude.

XLIX.

But from those hills the radiance of her smile
Hath vanish'd long, her step hath fled afar;
O'er Suli's frowning rocks she paused a while, (22)
Kindling the watch-fires of the mountain war;
And brightly glow'd her ardent spirit there,
Still brightest 'midst privation: o'er distress
It cast romantic splendour, and despair
But fann'd that beacon of the wilderness;
And rude ravine, and precipice, and dell,
Sent their deep echoes forth, her rallying voice to swell.

L.

Dark children of the hills! 'twas then ye wrought
Deeds of fierce daring, rudely, sternly grand;
As 'midst your craggy citadels ye fought,
And women mingled with your warrior band.
Then on the cliff the frantic mother stood (23)
High o'er the river's darkly-rolling wave,
And hurl'd, in dread delirium, to the flood
Her free-born infant, ne'er to be a slave.
For all was lost—all, save the power to die
The wild indignant death of savage liberty.

LI.

Now is that strife a tale of vanish'd days,
With mightier things forgotten soon to lie;
Yet oft hath minstrel sung, in lofty lays,
Deeds less adventurous, energies less high.
And the dread struggle's fearful memory still
O'er each wild rock a wilder aspect throws;
Sheds darker shadows o'er the frowning hill,
More solemn quiet o'er the glen's repose;
Lends to the rustling pines a deeper moan,
And the hoarse river's voice a murmur not its own.

LII.

For stillness now—the stillness of the dead,
Hath wrapt that conflict's lone and awful scene,
And man's forsaken homes, in ruin spread,
Tell where the storming of the cliffs hath been.
And there, o'er wastes magnificently rude,
What race may rove, unconscious of the chain?
Those realms have now no desert unsubdued,
Where Freedom's banner may be rear'd again:

Sunk are the ancient dwellings of her fame,
The children of her sons inherit but their name.

LIII.

Go, seek proud Sparta's monuments and fanes!
In scatter'd fragments o'er the vale they lie;
Of all they were not e'en enough remains
To lend their fall a mournful majesty. (24)
Birth-place of those whose names we first revered
In song and story—temple of the free!
O thou, the stern, the haughty, and the fear'd,
Are such thy relics, and can this be thee?
Thou shouldst have left a giant-wreck behind,
And e'en in ruin claim'd the wonder of mankind.

LIV.

For thine were spirits cast in other mould
Than all beside—and proved by ruder test;
They stood alone—the proud, the firm, the bold,
With the same seal indelibly imprest.
Theirs were no bright varieties of mind,
One image stamp'd the rough, colossal race,
In rugged grandeur frowning o'er mankind,
Stern, and disdainful of each milder grace.
As to the sky some mighty rock may tower,
Whose front can brave the storm, but will not rear
the flower.

LV.

Such were thy sons—their life a battle-day!
Their youth one lesson how for thee to die!
Closed is that task, and they have pass'd away
Like softer beings train'd to aims less high.

Yet bright on earth *their* fame who proudly fell,
True to their shields, the champions of thy cause,
Whose funeral column bade the stranger tell
How died the brave, obedient to thy laws! (25)
O lofty mother of heroic worth,
How couldst thou live to bring a meaner offspring forth?

LVI.

Hadst thou but perish'd with the free, nor known
A second race, when Glory's noon went by,
Then had thy name in single brightness shone
A watchword on the helm of liberty!
Thou shouldst have pass'd with all the light of fame,
And proudly sunk in ruins, not in chains.
But slowly set thy star 'midst clouds of shame,
And tyrants rose amidst thy falling fanes;
And thou, surrounded by thy warriors' graves
Hast drain'd the bitter cup once mingled for thy slaves.

LVII.

Now all is o'er—for thee alike are flown
Freedom's bright noon, and Slavery's twilight cloud;
And in thy fall, as in thy pride, alone,
Deep solitude is round thee, as a shroud
Home of Leonidas! thy halls are low,
From their cold altars have thy Lares fled,
O'er thee unmark'd the sunbeams fade or glow,
And wild-flowers wave, unbent by human tread;
And 'midst thy silence, as the grave's profound,
A voice, a step, would seem as some unearthly sound.

LVIII.

Taygetus still lifts his awful brow,
High o'er the mouldering city of the dead,
Sternly sublime; while o'er his robe of snow
Heaven's floating tints their warm suffusions spread.
And yet his rippling wave Eurotas leads
By tombs and ruins o'er the silent plain,
While whisp'ring there, his own wild graceful reeds
Rise as of old, when hail'd by classic strain;
There the rose laurels still in beauty wave, (26)
And a frail shrub survives to bloom o'er Sparta's grave.

LIX.

Oh! thus it is with man—a tree, a flower,
While nations perish, still renews its race,
And o'er the fallen records of his power
Spreads in wild pomp, or smiles in fairy grace.
The laurel shoots when those have pass'd away
Once rivals for its crown, the brave, the free;
The rose is flourishing o'er beauty's clay,
The myrtle blows when love hath ceased to be;
Green waves the bay when song and bard are fled,
And all that round us blooms, is blooming o'er the dead.

LX.

And still the olive spreads its foliage round
Morea's fallen sanctuaries and towers,
Once its green boughs Minerva's votaries crown'd,
Deem'd a meet offering for celestial powers.

The suppliant's hand its holy branches bore; (27)
They waved around the Olympic victor's head;
And, sanctified by many a rite of yore,
Its leaves the Spartan's honour'd bier o'erspread:
Those rites have vanish'd — but o'er vale and hill
Its fruitful groves arise, revered and hallow'd still. (28)

LXI.

Where now thy shrines, Eleusis! where thy fane
Of fearful visions, mysteries wild and high?
The pomp of rites, the sacrificial train,
The long procession's awful pageantry?
Quench'd is the torch of Ceres (29) — all around
Decay hath spread the stillness of her reign,
There never more shall choral hymns resound,
O'er the hush'd earth and solitary main;
Whose wave from Salamis deserted flows,
To bathe a silent shore of desolate repose.

LXII.

And oh! ye secret and terrific powers,
Dark oracles! in depth of groves that dwelt,
How are they sunk, the altars of your bowers,
Where Superstition trembled as she knelt!
Ye, the unknown, the viewless ones! that made
The elements your voice, the wind and wave;
Spirits! whose influence darken'd many a shade,
Mysterious visitants of fount and cave!
How long your power the awe-struck nations sway'd,
How long earth dreamt of you, and shudderingly obey'd!

LXIII.

And say, what marvel, in those early days,
While yet the light of heaven-born truth was not;
If man around him cast a fearful gaze,
Peopling with shadowy powers each dell and grot?
Awful is nature in her savage forms,
Her solemn voice commanding in its might,
And mystery then was in the rush of storms,
The gloom of woods, the majesty of night,
And mortals heard Fate's language in the blast,
And rear'd your forest-shrines, ye phantoms of the past!

LXIV.

Then through the foliage not a breeze might sigh
But with prophetic sound!—a waving tree,
A meteor flashing o'er the summer sky,
A bird's wild flight, reveal'd the things to be.
All spoke of unseen natures, and convey'd
Their inspiration; still they hover'd round,
Hallow'd the temple, whisper'd through the shade,
Pervaded loneliness, gave soul to sound;
Of them the fount, the forest, murmur'd still,
Their voice was in the stream, their footstep on the hill.

LXV.

Now is the train of Superstition flown,
Unearthly Beings walk on earth no more;
The deep wind swells with no portentous tone,
The rustling wood breathes no fatidic lore.

Fled are the phantoms of Livadia's cave,
There dwell no shadows, but of crag and steep;
Fount of Oblivion! in thy gushing wave, (30)
That murmurs nigh, those powers of terror sleep.
Oh! that such dreams alone had fled that clime,
But Greece is changed in all that could be changed by time!

LXVI.

Her skies are those whence many a mighty bard
Caught inspiration, glorious as their beams;
Her hills the same that heroes died to guard,
Her vales, that foster'd Art's divinest dreams!
But that bright spirit o'er the land that shone,
And all around pervading influence pour'd,
That lent the harp of Æschylus its tone,
And proudly hallow'd Lacedæmon's sword,
And guided Phidias o'er the yielding stone,
With them its ardours lived—with them its light is flown.

LXVII.

Thebes, Corinth, Argos!—ye, renown'd of old,
Where are your chiefs of high romantic name?
How soon the tale of ages may be told!
A page, a verse, records the fall of fame,
The work of centuries—we gaze on you,
Oh cities! once the glorious and the free,
The lofty tales that charm'd our youth renew,
And wondering ask, if these their scenes could be?
Search for the classic fane, the regal tomb,
And find the mosque alone—a record of their doom!

LXVIII.

How oft hath war his host of spoilers pour'd,
Fair Elis! o'er thy consecrated vales? (31)
There have the sunbeams glanced on spear and sword,
And banners floated on the balmy gales.
Once didst thou smile, secure in sanctitude,
As some enchanted isle 'mid stormy seas;
On thee no hostile footstep might intrude,
And pastoral sounds alone were on thy breeze.
Forsaken home of peace! that spell is broke,
Thou too hast heard the storm, and bow'd beneath the yoke.

LXIX.

And through Arcadia's wild and lone retreats
Far other sounds have echo'd than the strain
Of faun and dryad, from their woodland seats,
Or ancient reed of peaceful mountain-swain!
There, though at times Alpheus yet surveys,
On his green banks renew'd, the classic dance,
And nymph-like forms, and wild melodious lays,
Revive the sylvan scenes of old romance;
Yet brooding fear and dark suspicion dwell
'Midst Pan's deserted haunts, by fountain, cave, and dell.

LXX.

But thou, fair Attica! whose rocky bound
All art and nature's richest gifts enshrined,
Thou little sphere, whose soul-illumined round
Concentrated each sunbeam of the mind;

Who, as the summit of some Alpine height
Glows earliest, latest, with the blush of day,
Didst first imbibe the splendours of the light,
And smile the longest in its lingering ray; (32)
Oh! let us gaze on thee, and fondly deem
The past awhile restored, the present but a dream.

LXXI.

Let Fancy's vivid hues awhile prevail—
Wake at her call—be all thou wert once more!
Hark—hymns of triumph swell on every gale!
Lo—bright processions move along thy shore!
Again thy temples, 'midst the olive-shade,
Lovely in chaste simplicity arise;
And graceful monuments, in grove and glade,
Catch the warm tints of thy resplendent skies;
And sculptured forms, of high and heavenly mien,
In their calm beauty smile, around the sun-bright scene.

LXXII.

Again renew'd by Thought's creative spells,
In all her pomp thy city, Theseus! towers:
Within, around, the light of glory dwells
On art's fair fabrics, wisdom's holy bowers.
There marble fanes in finish'd grace ascend,
The pencil's world of life and beauty glows;
Shrines, pillars, porticoes, in grandeur blend,
Rich with the trophies of barbaric foes;
And groves of platane wave, in verdant pride,
The sage's blest retreats, by calm Ilissus' tide.

LXXIII.

Bright as that fairy vision of the wave,
Raised by the magic of Morgana's wand, (33)
On summer seas, that undulating lave
Romantic Sicily's Arcadian strand;
That pictured scene of airy colonnades,
Light palaces, in shadowy glory drest,
Enchanted groves, and temples, and arcades,
Gleaming and floating on the ocean's breast;
Athens! thus fair the dream of thee appears,
As Fancy's eye pervades the veiling cloud of years.

LXXIV.

Still be that cloud withdrawn—oh! mark on high,
Crowning yon hill, with temples richly graced,
That fane, august in perfect symmetry,
The purest model of Athenian taste.
Fair Parthenon! thy Doric pillars rise
In simple dignity, thy marble's hue
Unsullied shines, relieved by brilliant skies,
That round thee spread their deep ethereal blue;
And art o'er all thy light proportions throws
The harmony of grace, the beauty of repose.

LXXV.

And lovely o'er thee sleeps the sunny glow,
When morn and eve in tranquil splendour reign
And on thy sculptures, as they smile, bestow
Hues that the pencil emulates in vain.

Then the fair forms by Phidias wrought, unfold
Each latent grace, developing in light,
Catch from soft clouds of purple and of gold,
Each tint that passes, tremulously bright;
And seem indeed whate'er devotion deems,
While so suffused with heaven, so mingling with its beams.

LXXVI.

But oh! what words the vision may portray,
The form of sanctitude that guards thy shrine?
There stands thy goddess, robed in war's array,
Supremely glorious, awfully divine!
With spear and helm she stands, and flowing vest,
And sculptured ægis, to perfection wrought,
And on each heavenly lineament imprest,
Calmly sublime, the majesty of thought;
The pure intelligence, the chaste repose,—
All that a poet's dream around Minerva throws.

LXXVII.

Bright age of Pericles! let fancy still
Through time's deep shadows all thy splendour trace,
And in each work of art's consummate skill
Hail the free spirit of thy lofty race.
That spirit, roused by every proud reward
That hope could picture, glory could bestow,
Foster'd by all the sculptor and the bard
Could give of immortality below.
Thus were thy heroes form'd, and o'er their name
Thus did thy genius shed imperishable fame.

LXXVIII.

Mark in the throng'd Ceramicus, the train
Of mourners weeping o'er the martyr'd brave:
Proud be the tears devoted to the slain,
Holy the amaranth strew'd upon their grave! (34)
And hark—unrivall'd eloquence proclaims
Their deeds, their trophies, with triumphant voice!
Hark—Pericles records their honour'd names! (35)
Sons of the fallen, in their lot rejoice:
What hath life brighter than so bright a doom?
What power hath fate to soil the garlands of the tomb?

LXXIX.

Praise to the valiant dead! for them doth art
Exhaust her skill, their triumphs bodying forth;
Theirs are enshrined names, and every heart
Shall bear the blazon'd impress of their worth.
Bright on the dreams of youth their fame shall rise,
Their fields of fight shall epic song record;
And, when the voice of battle rends the skies,
Their name shall be their country's rallying word!
While fane and column rise august to tell
How Athens honours those for her who proudly fell.

LXXX.

City of Theseus! bursting on the mind,
Thus dost thou rise, in all thy glory fled!
Thus guarded by the mighty of mankind,
Thus hallow'd by the memory of the dead:
Alone in beauty and renown—a scene
Whose tints are drawn from freedom's loveliest ray.

'Tis but a vision now—yet thou hast been
More than the brightest vision might portray;
And every stone, with but a vestige fraught
Of thee, hath latent power to wake some lofty thought.

LXXXI.

Fall'n are thy fabrics, that so oft have rung
To choral melodies, and tragic lore;
Now is the lyre of Sophocles unstrung,
The song that hail'd Harmodius peals no more.
Thy proud Piræus is a desert strand,
Thy stately shrines are mould'ring on their hill,
Closed are the triumphs of the sculptor's hand,
The magic voice of eloquence is still;
Minerva's veil is rent (36)—her image gone,
Silent the sage's bower—the warrior's tomb o'erthrown.

LXXXII.

Yet in decay thine exquisite remains
Wond'ring we view, and silently revere,
As traces left on earth's forsaken plains
By vanish'd beings of a nobler sphere!
Not all the old magnificence of Rome,
All that dominion there hath left to time;
Proud Coliseum, or commanding dome,
Triumphal arch, or obelisk sublime,
Can bid such reverence o'er the spirit steal,
As aught by thee imprest with beauty's plastic seal.

LXXXIII.

Though still the empress of the sunburnt waste,
Palmyra rises, desolately grand —
Though with rich gold (37) and massy sculpture graced,
Commanding still, Persepolis may stand
In haughty solitude — though sacred Nile
The first-born temples of the world surveys,
And many an awful and stupendous pile
Thebes of the hundred gates e'en yet displays;
City of Pericles! O who, like thee,
Can teach how fair the works of mortal hand may be?

LXXXIV.

Thou ledd'st the way to that illumined sphere
Where sovereign beauty dwells; and thence didst bear,
Oh, still triumphant in that high career!
Bright archetypes of all the grand and fair.
And still to thee th' enlighten'd mind hath flown
As to her country;—thou hast been to earth
A cynosure;—and, e'en from victory's throne
Imperial Rome gave homage to thy worth;
And nations, rising to their fame afar,
Still to thy model turn, as seamen to their star.

LXXXV.

Glory to those whose relics thus arrest
The gaze of ages! Glory to the free!
For they, they only, could have thus imprest
Their mighty image on the years to be!

Empires and cities in oblivion lie,
Grandeur may vanish, conquest be forgot:—
To leave on earth renown that cannot die,
Of high-soul'd genius is th' unrivall'd lot.
Honour to thee, O Athens! thou hast shown
What mortals may attain, and seized the palm alone.

LXXXVI.

Oh! live there those who view with scornful eyes
All that attests the brightness of thy prime?
Yes; they who dwell beneath thy lovely skies,
And breathe th' inspiring ether of thy clime!
Their path is o'er the mightiest of the dead,
Their homes are 'midst the works of noblest arts;
Yet all around their gaze, beneath their tread,
Not one proud thrill of loftier thought imparts.
Such are the conquerors of Minerva's land,
Where Genius first reveal'd the triumphs of his hand!

LXXXVII.

For them in vain the glowing light may smile
O'er the pale marble, colouring's warmth to shed,
And in chaste beauty many a sculptured pile
Still o'er the dust of heroes lift its head.
No patriot feeling binds them to the soil,
Whose tombs and shrines their fathers have not rear'd,
Their glance is cold indifference, and their toil
But to destroy what ages have revered,
As if exulting sternly to erase
Whate'er might prove *that* land had nursed a nobler race.

LXXXVIII.

And who may grieve that, rescued from their hands,
Spoilers of excellence and foes to art,
Thy relics, Athens! borne to other lands,
Claim homage still to thee from every heart?
Though now no more th' exploring stranger's sight,
Fix'd in deep reverence on Minerva's fane,
Shall hail, beneath their native heaven of light,
All that remain'd of forms adored in vain;
A few short years—and, vanish'd from the scene,
To blend with classic dust their proudest lot had been.

LXXXIX.

Fair Parthenon! yet still must Fancy weep
For thee, thou work of nobler spirits flown.
Bright, as of old, the sunbeams o'er thee sleep
In all their beauty still—and thine is gone!
Empires have sunk since thou wert first revered,
And varying rites have sanctified thy shrine.
The dust is round thee of the race that rear'd
Thy walls; and thou—their fate must soon be thine!
But when shall earth again exult to see
Visions divine like theirs renew'd in aught like thee?

XC.

Lone are thy pillars now—each passing gale
Sighs o'er them as a spirit's voice, which moan'd
That loneliness, and told the plaintive tale
Of the bright synod once above them throned.

Mourn, graceful ruin! on thy sacred hill,
Thy gods, thy rites, a kindred fate have shared:
Yet art thou honour'd in each fragment still
That wasting years and barbarous hands had spared;
Each hallow'd stone, from rapine's fury borne,
Shall wake bright dreams of thee in ages yet unborn.

XCI.

Yes; in those fragments, though by time defaced
And rude insensate conquerors, yet remains
All that may charm th' enlighten'd eye of taste,
On shores where still inspiring freedom reigns.
As vital fragrance breathes from every part
Of the crush'd myrtle, or the bruised rose,
E'en thus th' essential energy of art
There in each wreck imperishably glows! (38)
The soul of Athens lives in every line,
Pervading brightly still the ruins of her shrine.

XCII.

Mark—on the storied frieze the graceful train
The holy festival's triumphal throng,
In fair procession, to Minerva's fane,
With many a sacred symbol, move along.
There every shade of bright existence trace,
The fire of youth, the dignity of age;
The matron's calm austerity of grace,
The ardent warrior, the benignant sage;
The nymph's light symmetry, the chief's proud mien;
Each ray of beauty caught and mingled in the scene.

XCIII.

Art unobtrusive there ennobles form, (39)
Each pure chaste outline exquisitely flows;
There e'en the steed, with bold expression warm,(40)
Is clothed with majesty, with being glows.
One mighty mind hath harmonized the whole;
Those varied groups the same bright impress bear;
One beam and essence of exalting soul
Lives in the grand, the delicate, the fair;
And well that pageant of the glorious dead
Blends us with nobler days, and loftier spirits fled.

XCIV.

O, conquering Genius! that couldst thus detain
The subtle graces, fading as they rise,
Eternalize expression's fleeting reign,
Arrest warm life in all its energies,
And fix them on the stone—thy glorious lot
Might wake ambition's envy, and create
Powers half divine: while nations are forgot,
A thought, a dream of thine hath vanquish'd fate!
And when thy hand first gave its wonders birth,
The realms that hail them now scarce claim'd a name on earth.

XCV.

Wert thou some spirit of a purer sphere
But once beheld, and never to return?
No—we may hail again thy bright career,
Again on earth a kindred fire shall burn!
Though thy least relics, e'en in ruin, bear
A stamp of heaven, that ne'er hath been renew'd—

A light inherent—let not man despair:
Still be hope ardent, patience unsubdued;
For still is nature fair, and thought divine,
And art hath won a world in models pure as thine.(41)

XCVI.

Gaze on yon forms, corroded and defaced—
Yet there the germ of future glory lies!
Their virtual grandeur could not be erased;
It clothes them still, though veil'd from common eyes.
They once were gods and heroes(42)—and beheld
As the blest guardians of their native scene;
And hearts of warriors, sages, bards, have swell'd
With awe that own'd their sovereignty of mien.
—Ages have vanish'd since those hearts were cold,
And still those shatter'd forms retain their godlike mould.

XCVII.

'Midst their bright kindred, from their marble throne
They have look'd down on thousand storms of time;
Surviving power, and fame, and freedom flown,
They still remain'd, still tranquilly sublime!
Till mortal hands the heavenly conclave marr'd.
Th' Olympian groups have sunk, and are forgot;
Not e'en their dust could weeping Athens guard—
But these were destined to a nobler lot!
And they have borne, to light another land,
The quenchless ray that soon shall gloriously expand.

XCVIII.

Phidias! supreme in thought! what hand but thine,
In human works thus blending earth and heaven,
O'er nature's truth hath shed that grace divine,
To mortal form immortal grandeur given?
What soul but thine, infusing all its power,
In these last monuments of matchless days,
Could, from their ruins, bid young Genius tower,
And Hope aspire to more exalted praise?
And guide deep Thought to that secluded height
Where Excellence is throned, in purity of light.

XCIX.

And who can tell how pure, how bright a flame,
Caught from these models, may illume the west?
What British Angelo may rise to fame, (43)
On the free isle what beams of art may rest?
Deem not, O England! that by climes confined,
Genius and taste diffuse a partial ray; (44)
Deem not th' eternal energies of mind
Sway'd by that sun whose doom is but decay!
Shall thought be foster'd but by skies serene?
No! thou hast power to be what Athens e'er hath been.

C.

But thine are treasures oft unprized, unknown,
And cold neglect hath blighted many a mind,
O'er whose young ardours had thy smile but shone,
Their soaring flight had left a world behind!
And many a gifted hand, that might have wrought
To Grecian excellence the breathing stone,

Or each pure grace of Raphael's pencil caught,
Leaving no record of its power, is gone!
While thou hast fondly sought, on distant coast,
Gems far less rich than those, thus precious, and thus lost.

CI.

Yet rise, O Land, in all but art alone,
Bid the sole wreath that is not thine be won!
Fame dwells around thee—Genius is thine own;
Call his rich blooms to life—be thou their sun!
So, should dark ages o'er thy glory sweep,
Should *thine* e'er be as now are Grecian plains,
Nations unborn shall track thine own blue deep,
To hail thy shore, to worship thy remains;
Thy mighty monuments with reverence trace,
And cry, "This ancient soil hath nursed a glorious race!"

NOTES.

Note 1.

Round Doric Pæstum's solitary fanes.

"The Pæstan rose, from its peculiar fragrance and the singularity of blowing twice a-year, is often mentioned by the classic poets. The wild rose, which now shoots up among the ruins, is of the small single damask kind, with a very high perfume; as a farmer assured me on the spot, it flowers both in spring and autumn."——Swinburne's *Travels in the Two Sicilies.*

Note 2.

Swell'd o'er that tide — the sons of battle sleep.

In the naval engagements of the Greeks, "it was usual for the soldiers before the fight to sing a pæan, or hymn, to Mars, and after the fight another to Apollo." —— See Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, vol. ii. p. 155.

Note 3.

Her own bright East, thy son, Morea! flies.

The emigration of the natives of the Morea to different parts of Asia is thus mentioned by Chateaubriand in his *Itinéraire de Paris à Jerusalem*—"Parvenu au dernier degré du malheur, le Moraïte s'arrache de son pays, et va chercher en Asie un sort moins rigoureux. Vain espoir! il retrouve des cadis et des pachas jusques dans les sables de Jourdain et dans les deserts de Palmyre."

Note 4.

Wilt thou receive the wanderer to thine arms.

In the same work, Chateaubriand also relates his having met with several Greek emigrants who had established themselves in the woods of Florida.

Note 5.

And isles of flowers, bright-floating o'er the tide.

"La grace est toujours unie à la magnificence dans les scènes de la nature: et tandis que le courant du milieu entraîne vers la mer les cadavres des pins et des chênes, on voit sur les deux courant latéraux, remonter, le long des rivages des îles flottantes de Pistia et de Nénuphar, dont les roses jaunes s'élèvent comme de petits papillons." —— *Description of the Banks of the Mississippi*, Chateaubriand's *Atala*.

Note 6.

Wild, as when sung by bards of elder time.

"Looking generally at the narrowness and abruptness of this mountain-channel (Tempe), and contrasting it with the course

of the Peneus, through the plains of Thessaly, the imagination instantly recurs to the tradition that these plains were once covered with water, for which some convulsion of nature had subsequently opened this narrow passage. The term *vale*, in our language, is usually employed to describe scenery in which the predominant features are breadth, beauty, and repose. The reader has already perceived that the term is wholly inapplicable to the scenery at this spot, and that the phrase, *vale* of Tempe, is one that depends on poetic fiction. . . . . The real character of Tempe, though it perhaps be less beautiful, yet possesses more of magnificence than is implied in the epithet given to it. . . . . To those who have visited St. Vincent's rocks, below Bristol, I cannot convey a more sufficient idea of Tempe, than by saying that its scenery resembles, though on a much larger scale, that of the former place. The Peneus, indeed, as it flows through the valley, is not greatly wider than the Avon; and the channel between the cliffs is equally contracted in its dimensions· but these cliffs themselves are much loftier and more precipitous, and project their vast masses of rock with still more extraordinary abruptness over the hollow beneath." —— HOLLAND'S *Travels in Albania, &c.*

NOTE 7.

Years, that have changed thy river's classic name.

The modern name of the Peneus is Salympria.

NOTE 8.

Where the rich arbute's coral berries glow.

"Towards the lower part of Tempe, these cliffs are peaked in a very singular manner, and form projecting angles on the vast perpendicular faces of rock which they present towards the chasm; where the surface renders it possible, the summits and ledges of the rocks are for the most part covered with small wood, chiefly oak, with the arbutus and other shrubs. On the banks of the river, wherever there is a small interval between the water and the cliffs, it is covered by the rich and widely

spreading foliage of the plane, the oak, and other forest trees, which in these situations have attained a remarkable size, and in various places extend their shadow far over the channel of the stream." . . . . "The rocks on each side of the vale of Tempe are evidently the same; what may be called, I believe, a coarse bluish-grey marble with veins and portions of the rock, in which the marble is of finer quality." —— HOLLAND'S *Travels in Albania, &c.*

NOTE 9.

Where Greece her councils held, her Pythian victors crown'd.

The Amphictyonic council was convened in spring and autumn at Delphi or Thermopylæ, and presided at the Pythian games which were celebrated at Delphi every fifth year.

NOTE 10.

Bloom the wild laurels o'er the warlike dead.

"This spot (the field of Mantinea) on which so many brave men were laid to rest, is now covered with rosemary and laurels." —— POUQUEVILLE'S *Travels in the Morea.*

NOTE 11.

Where the dark upas taints the gale around.

For the accounts of the upas or poison-tree of Java, now generally believed to be fabulous, or greatly exaggerated, see the notes to DARWIN'S *Botanic Garden.*

NOTE 12.

Its sculptured lions, richly wrought arcades.

"The court most to be admired of the Alhambra is that called the court of the Lions; it is ornamented with sixty elegant pillars of an architecture which bears not the least resemblance to any of the known orders, and might be called the Arabian order. . . . But its principal ornament, and that from which it took its name, is an alabaster cup, six feet in diameter, sup-

ported by twelve lions, which is said to have been made in imitation of the Brazen Sea of Solomon's temple." —— BOURGOANNE'S *Travels in Spain.*

NOTE 13.

Bright as that Pleïad sphered in Mecca's fane.

"Sept des plus fameux parmi les anciens poëtes Arabiques, sont designés par les ecrivains orientaux sous le nom de *Pleïade Arabique*, et leurs ouvrages etaient suspendus autour de la Caaba, ou Mosque de la Mecque." —— SISMONDI *Litterature du Midi.*

NOTE 14.

And thou, O last and noblest Constantine!

"The distress and fall of the last Constantine are more glorious than the long prosperity of the Byzantine Cæsars." —— GIBBON' *Decline and Fall, &c.*, vol. xii. p. 226.

NOTE 15.

The closing night of that imperial race!

See the description of the night previous to the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet II. —— GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall, &c.*, vol. xii. p. 225.

NOTE 16.

And the Seven Towers are scaled, and all is won and lost.

"This building (the Castle of the Seven Towers) is mentioned as early as the sixth century of the Christian era, as a spot which contributed to the defence of Constantinople, and it was the principal bulwark of the town on the coast of the Propontis, in the last periods of the empire." —— POUQUEVILLE'S *Travels in the Morea.*

NOTE 17.

Preserved inviolate their awful fane.

See the account from Herodotus of the supernatural defence of Delphi. —— MITFORD'S *Greece*, vol. i. p. 396–7.

Note 18.

Who from the dead at Marathon arose.

"In succeeding ages the Athenians honoured Theseus as a demigod, induced to it as well by other reasons as because, when they were fighting the Medes at Marathon, a considerable part of the army thought they saw the apparition of Theseus completely armed, and bearing down before them upon the barbarians." —— Langhorne's *Plutarch, Life of Theseus.*

Note 19.

Or they whose forms, to Alaric's awe-struck eye.

"From Thermopylæ to Sparta, the leader of the Goths (Alaric) pursued his victorious march without encountering any mortal antagonist; but one of the advocates of expiring paganism has confidently asserted that the walls of Athens were guarded by the goddess Minerva, with her formidable ægis, and by the angry phantom of Achilles, and that the conqueror was dismayed by the presence of the hostile deities of Greece." —— Gibbon's *Decline and Fall, &c.*, vol. v. p. 183.

Note 20.

Ye slept, oh heroes! chief ones of the earth.

"Even all the *chief ones of the earth.*" —— Isaiah, chap. xiv.

Note 21.

Perish'd the conquering weapons of your war.

"How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" —— Samuel, book ii. chap. i.

Note 22.

O'er Suli's frowning rocks she paused awhile.

For several interesting particulars relative to the Suliote warfare with Ali Pasha, see Holland's *Travels in Albania.*

Note 23.

Then on the cliff the frantic mother stood.

"It is related as an authentic story, that a group of Suliote women assembled on one of the precipices adjoining the modern seraglio, and threw their infants into the chasm below, that they might not become the slaves of the enemy." —— Holland's *Travels, &c.*

Note 24.

To lend their fall a mournful majesty.

The ruins of Sparta, near the modern town of Mistra, are very inconsiderable, and only sufficient to mark the site of the ancient city. The scenery around them is described by travellers as very striking.

Note 25.

How died the brave, obedient to thy laws.

The inscription composed by Simonides for the Spartan monument in the pass of Thermopylæ has been thus translated: "Stranger, go tell the Lacedemonians that we have obeyed their laws, and that we lie here."

Note 26.

There the rose-laurels still in beauty wave.

"In the Eurotas I observed abundance of those famous reeds which were known in the earliest ages, and all the rivers and marshes of Greece are replete with rose-laurels, while the springs and rivulets are covered with lilies, tube-roses, hyacinths, and narcissus orientalis." —— Pouqueville's *Travels in the Morea.*

Note 27.

The suppliant's hand its holy branches bore.

It was usual for suppliants to carry an olive branch bound with wool.

Note 28.

Its fruitful groves arise, revered and hallow'd still.

The olive, according to Pouqueville, is still regarded with veneration by the people of the Morea.

Note 29.

Quench'd is the torch of Ceres — all around.

It was customary at Eleusis, on the fifth day of the festival, for men and women to run about with torches in their hands, and also to dedicate torches to Ceres, and to contend who should present the largest. This was done in memory of the journey of Ceres in search of Proserpine, during which she was lighted by a torch kindled in the flames of Etna. —— Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, vol. i. p. 392.

Note 30.

Fount of Oblivion! in thy gushing wave.

The fountains of Oblivion and Memory, with the Hercynian fountain, are still to be seen amongst the rocks near Livadia, though the situation of the cave of Trophonius, in their vicinity, cannot be exactly ascertained. —— See Holland's *Travels.*

Note 31.

Fair Elis, o'er thy consecrated vales.

Elis was anciently a sacred territory, its inhabitants being considered as consecrated to the service of Jupiter. All armies marching through it delivered up their weapons, and received them again when they had passed its boundary.

Note 32.

And smile the longest in its lingering ray.

"We are assured by Thucydides that Attica was the province of Greece in which population first became settled, and where the earliest progress was made toward civilization." —— Mitford's *Greece*, vol. i. p. 35.

Note 33.

Raised by the magic of Morgana's wand.

Fata Morgana. This remarkable aërial phenomenon, which is thought by the lower order of Sicilians to be the work of a fairy, is thus described by Father Angelucci, whose account is quoted by Swinburne.

"On the 15th August, 1643, I was surprised, as I stood at my window, with a most wonderful spectacle: the sea that washes the Sicilian shore swelled up, and became, for ten miles in length, like a chain of dark mountains, while the waters near our Calabrian coast grew quite smooth, and in an instant appeared like one clear polished mirror. On this glass was depicted, in chiaro scuro, a string of several thousands of pilasters, all equal in height, distance, and degrees of light and shade. In a moment they bent into arcades, like Roman aqueducts. A long cornice was next formed at the top, and above it rose innumerable castles, all perfectly alike; these again changed into towers, which were shortly after lost in colonnades, then windows, and at last ended in pines, cypresses, and other trees." —— Swinburne's *Travels in the Two Sicilies.*

Note 34.

Holy the Amaranth strew'd upon their grave.

All sorts of purple and white flowers were supposed by the Greeks to be acceptable to the dead, and used in adorning tombs; as amaranth, with which the Thessalians decorated the tomb of Achilles. —— Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, vol. ii. p. 232.

Note 35.

Hark! Pericles records their honour'd names.

Pericles, on his return to Athens after the reduction of Samos, celebrated, in a splendid manner, the obsequies of his countrymen who fell in that war, and pronounced himself the funeral oration usual on such occasions. This gained him great applause; and when he came down from the rostrum, the women paid their respects to him, and presented him with crowns and chaplets, like a champion just returned victorious from the lists. —— Langhorne's *Plutarch, Life of Pericles.*

Note 36.

Minerva's veil is rent — her image gone.

The peplus, which is supposed to have been suspended as an awning over the statue of Minerva, in the Parthenon, was a principal ornament of the Panathenaic festival; and it was embroidered with various colours, representing the battle of the Gods and Titans, and the exploits of Athenian heroes. When the festival was celebrated, the peplus was brought from the Acropolis, and suspended as a sail to the vessel, which on that day was conducted through the Ceramicus and principal streets of Athens, till it had made the circuit of the Acropolis. The peplus was then carried to the Parthenon, and consecrated to Minerva. —— See Chandler's *Travels*, Stuart's *Athens*, *&c.*

Note 37.

Though with rich gold and massy sculpture graced.

The gilding amidst the ruins of Persepolis is still, according to Winckelmann, in high preservation.

Note 38.

There in each wreck imperishably glows.

"In the most broken fragment, the same great principle of life can be proved to exist, as in the most perfect figure," is one of the observations of Mr. Haydon on the Elgin Marbles.

Note 39.

Art unobtrusive there ennobles form.

"Everything here breathes life, with a veracity, with an exquisite knowledge of art, but without the least ostentation or parade of it, which is concealed by consummate and masterly skill." —— Canova's *Letter to the Earl of Elgin.*

Note 40.

There e'en the steed, with bold expression warm.

Mr. West, after expressing his admiration of the horse's head in Lord Elgin's collection of Athenian sculpture, thus proceeds: —"We feel the same when we view the young equestrian Athenians, and, in observing them, we are insensibly carried on with the impression that they and their horses actually existed, as we see them, at the instant when they were converted into marble." —— West's *Second Letter to Lord Elgin.*

Note 41.

And art hath won a world in models pure as thine.

Mr. Flaxman thinks that sculpture has very greatly improved within these last twenty years, and that his opinion is not singular—because works of such prime importance as the Elgin Marbles could not remain in any country without a consequent improvement of the public taste, and the talents of the artist. —— See the *Evidence given in Reply to Interrogatories from the Committee on the Elgin Marbles.*

Note 42.

They once were gods and heroes — and beheld.

The Theseus and Ilissus, which are considered by Sir T. Lawrence, Mr. Westmacott, and other distinguished artists, to be of a higher class than the Apollo Belvidere, "because there is in them a union of very grand form, with a more true and natural expression of the effect of action upon the human frame than there is in the Apollo, or any of the other more celebrated statues. —— See *The Evidence, &c.*

Note 43.

What British Angelo may rise to fame.

"Let us suppose a young man at this time in London, endowed with powers such as enabled Michael Angelo to advance the arts, as he did, by the aid of one mutilated specimen of Grecian

excellence in sculpture, to what an eminence might not such a genius carry art, by the opportunity of studying those sculptures, in the aggregate, which adorned the Temple of Minerva at Athens?"—WEST'S *Second Letter to Lord Elgin.*

NOTE 44.

Genius and taste diffuse a partial ray.

In allusion to the theories of Du Bos, Winckelmann, Montesquieu, &c., with regard to the inherent obstacles in the climate of England to the progress of genius and the arts.—See HOARE'S *Epochs of the Arts*, page 84, 85.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

CAMOENS, AND OTHER POETS.

"Siamo nati veramente in un secolo in cui gl'ingegni e gli studj degli uomini sono rivolti all' utilità. L'Agricoltura, le Arti, il Commercio acquistano tutto di novi lumi dalle ricerche de' Saggi; e il voler farsi un nome *tentando di dilettare*, quand' altri v'aspira con più giustizia giovando, sembra impresa dura e difficile."—— SAVIOLI.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

CAMOENS, AND OTHER POETS.

SONNET 70.

"Na metade do ceo subido ardia."

High in the glowing heavens, with cloudless beam,
The sun had reach'd the zenith of his reign,
And for the living fount, the gelid stream,
Each flock forsook the herbage of the plain:

'Midst the dark foliage of the forest shade,
The birds had shelter'd from the scorching ray;
Hush'd were their melodies—and grove and glade
Resounded but the shrill cicada's lay:

When, through the grassy vale, a love-lorn swain,
To seek the maid who but despised his pain,
Breathing vain sighs of fruitless passion, roved:
"Why pine for her," the slighted wanderer cried,
"By whom thou art not loved?" and thus replied
An echo's murmuring voice—"*Thou art not loved!*"

SONNET 282.

FROM PSALM CXXXVII.

"Na ribeira do Euphrates assentado."

Wrapt in sad musings, by Euphrates' stream
I sat, retracing days for ever flown,
While rose thine image on the exile's dream,
O much-loved Salem! and thy glories gone.

When they who caused the ceaseless tears I shed,
Thus to their captive spoke,—"Why sleep thy lays?
Sing of thy treasures lost, thy splendour fled,
And all thy triumphs in departed days!

"Know'st thou not, Harmony's resistless charm
Can soothe each passion, and each grief disarm?
Sing then, and tears will vanish from thine eye."
With sighs I answer'd,—When the cup of woe
Is fill'd, till misery's bitter draught o'erflow,
The mourner's cure is not to sing—but die.

PART OF ECLOGUE 15.

"Se lá no assento da maior alteza."

If in thy glorious home above
Thou still recallest earthly love,
If yet retain'd a thought may be
Of him, whose heart hath bled for thee;

Remember still how deeply shrined,
Thine image in his joyless mind,

Each well-known scene, each former care,
Forgotten—thou alone art there!

Remember that thine eye-beam's light
Hath fled for ever from his sight,
And, with that vanish'd sunshine lost,
Is every hope he cherish'd most.

Think that his life, from thee apart,
Is all but weariness of heart,
Each stream, whose music once was dear,
Now murmurs discord to his ear.

Through thee, the morn, whose cloudless rays
Woke him to joy in other days,
Now, in the light of beauty drest,
Brings but new sorrows to his breast.

Through thee, the heavens are dark to him,
The sun's meridian blaze is dim;
And harsh were e'en the bird of eve,
But that her song still loves to grieve.

All it hath been, his heart forgets,
So alter'd by its long regrets;
Each wish is changed, each hope is o'er,
And joy's light spirit wakes no more.

SONNET 271.

"A formosura desta fresca serra."

This mountain-scene, with sylvan grandeur crown'd,
These chestnut-woods, in summer verdure bright;
These founts and rivulets, whose mingling sound
Lulls every bosom to serene delight;

Soft on these hills the sun's declining ray;
This clime, where all is new; these murmuring seas;
Flocks, to the fold that bend their lingering way;
Light clouds, contending with the genial breeze;

And all that Nature's lavish hands dispense,
In gay luxuriance, charming every sense,
Ne'er in thy absence, can delight my breast:
Nought, without thee, my weary soul beguiles:
And joy may beam; yet, 'midst her brightest smiles,
A secret grief is mine, that will not rest.

SONNET 186.

"Os olhos onde o casto Amor ardia."

Those eyes, whence Love diffused his purest light,
Proud in such beaming orbs his reign to show;
That face, with tints of mingling lustre bright,
Where the rose mantled o'er the living snow;

The rich redundance of that golden hair,
Brighter than sunbeams of meridian day;
That form so graceful, and that hand so fair,
Where now those treasures?—mouldering into clay!

Thus, like some blossom prematurely torn,
Hath young Perfection wither'd in its morn,
Touch'd by the hand that gathers but to blight!
Oh! how could Love survive his bitter tears?
Shed, not for her, who mounts to happier spheres,
But for his own sad fate, thus wrapt in starless night!

SONNET 108.

"Brandas aguas do Tejo que passando."

Fair Tajo! thou, whose calmly-flowing tide
Bathes the fresh verdure of these lovely plains,
Enlivening all where'er thy waves may glide,
Flowers, herbage, flocks, and sylvan nymphs, and swains.

Sweet stream! I know not when my steps again
Shall tread thy shores; and while to part I mourn,
I have no hope to meliorate my pain,
No dream that whispers—I may yet return!

My frowning destiny, whose watchful care
Forbids me blessings, and ordains despair,
Commands me thus to leave thee, and repine:
And I must vainly mourn the scenes I fly,
And breathe on other gales my plaintive sigh,
And blend my tears with other waves than thine!

SONNET 23.—TO A LADY WHO DIED AT SEA.

"Chara minha inimiga, em cuja mao."

Thou, to whose power my hopes, my joys, I give,
Oh, fondly loved! my bosom's dearest care!
Earth, which denied to lend thy form a grave,
Yields not one spell to soothe my deep despair!

Yes! the wild seas entomb those charms divine,
Dark o'er thy head th' eternal billows roll;
But while one ray of life or thought is mine,
Still shalt thou live, the inmate of my soul.

And if the tones of my uncultured song
Have power the sad remembrance to prolong,
Of love so ardent, and of faith so pure;
Still shall my verse thine epitaph remain,
Still shall thy charms be deathless in my strain,
While Time, and Love, and Memory, shall endure.

SONNET 19.

"Alma minha gentil, que te partiste."

Spirit beloved! whose wing so soon hath flown
The joyless precincts of this earthly sphere,
How is yon Heaven eternally thine own,
Whilst I deplore thy loss, a captive here!

Oh! if allow'd in thy divine abode
Of aught on earth an image to retain,
Remember still the fervent love which glow'd
In my fond bosom, pure from every stain.

And if thou deem that all my faithful grief,
Caused by thy loss, and hopeless of relief,
Can merit thee, sweet native of the skies!
Oh! ask of Heaven, which call'd thee soon away,
That I may join thee in those realms of day,
Swiftly, as *thou* hast vanish'd from mine eyes.

"Que estranho caso de amor!"

How strange a fate in love is mine!
How dearly prized the pains I feel!
Pangs, that to rend my soul combine,
With avarice I conceal:
For did the world the tale divine,

My lot would then be deeper woe,
And mine is grief that none must know.

To mortal ears I may not dare
Unfold the cause, the pain I prove;
'Twould plunge in ruin and despair
Or me, or her I love.
My soul delights alone to bear
Her silent, unsuspected woe,
And none shall pity, none shall know.

Thus buried in my bosom's urn,
Thus in my inmost heart conceal'd,
Let me alone the secret mourn,
In pangs unsoothed and unreveal'd.
For, whether happiness or woe,
Or life or death its power bestow,
It is what none on earth must know.

SONNET 58.

"Se as penas com que Amor tao mal me trata."

Should Love, the tyrant of my suffering heart,
Yet long enough protract his votary's days,
To see the lustre from those eyes depart,
The lode-stars now[1] that fascinate my gaze;
To see rude Time the living roses blight,
That o'er thy cheek their loveliness unfold,
And all unpitying, change their tresses bright,
To silvery whiteness, from their native gold;

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[1] "Your eyes are lode-stars." — Shakspeare.

Oh! then thy heart an equal change will prove,
And mourn the coldness that repell'd my love,
When tears and penitence will all be vain;
And I shall see thee weep for days gone by,
And in thy deep regret and fruitless sigh,
Find amplest vengeance for my former pain.

SONNET 178.

"Já cantei, já chorei a dura guerra."

Oft have I sung and mourn'd the bitter woes,
Which love for years hath mingled with my fate,
While he the tale forbade me to disclose,
That taught his votaries their deluded state.

Nymphs! who dispense Castalia's living stream,
Ye, who from Death oblivion's mantle steal,
Grant me a strain in powerful tone supreme,
Each grief by love inflicted to reveal:

That those whose ardent hearts adore his sway,
May hear experience breathe a warning lay—
How false his smiles, his promises how vain!
Then, if ye deign this effort to inspire,
When the sad task is o'er, my plaintive lyre,
For ever hush'd, shall slumber in your fane.

SONNET 80.

"Como quando do mar tempestuoso."

Saved from the perils of the stormy wave,
And faint with toil, the wanderer of the main,
But just escaped from shipwreck's billowy grave,
Trembles to hear its horrors named again.

How warm his vow, that Ocean's fairest mien
No more shall lure him from the smiles of home!
Yet soon, forgetting each terrific scene,
Once more he turns, o'er boundless deeps to roam.

Lady! thus I, who vainly oft in flight
Seek refuge from the dangers of thy sight,
Make the firm vow to shun thee and be free:
But my fond heart, devoted to its chain,
Still draws me back where countless perils reign,
And grief and ruin spread their snares for me.

SONNET 239.—FROM PSALM CXXXVII.

"Em Babylonia sobre os rios, quando."

Beside the streams of Babylon, in tears
Of vain desire, we sat; remembering thee,
O hallow'd Sion! and the vanish'd years,
When Israel's chosen sons were blest and free:

Our harps, neglected and untuned, we hung
Mute on the willows of the stranger's land;
When songs, like those that in thy fanes we sung,
Our foes demanded from their captive band.

How shall our voices, on a foreign shore
(We answer'd those whose chains the exile wore),
The songs of God, our sacred songs, renew?
If I forget, 'midst grief and wasting toil,
Thee, O Jerusalem! my native soil!
May my right hand forget its cunning too!

SONNET 128.

"Huma admiravel herva se conhece."

THERE blooms a plant, whose gaze from hour to hour,
Still to the sun with fond devotion turns,
Wakes, when Creation hails his dawning power,
And most expands, when most her idol burns:

But when he seeks the bosom of the deep,
His faithful plant's reflected charms decay;
Then fade her flowers, her leaves discolour'd weep,
Still fondly pining for the vanish'd ray.

Thou whom I love, the daystar of my sight!
When thy dear presence wakes me to delight,
Joy in my soul unfolds her fairest flower:
But in thy heaven of smiles alone it blooms,
And, of their light deprived, in grief consumes,
Born but to live within thine eye-beam's power.

"Polo meu apartamento."

AMIDST the bitter tears that fell
In anguish at my last farewell,
Oh! who would dream that joy could dwell,
To make that moment bright?
Yet be my judge, each heart! and say,
Which then could most my bosom sway,
Affliction or delight?

It was, when Hope, oppress'd with woes,
Seem'd her dim eyes in death to close,
That rapture's brightest beam arose
In sorrow's darkest night.
Thus, if my soul survive that hour,
'Tis that my fate o'ercame the power
Of anguish with delight.

For oh! her love, so long unknown,
She *then* confess'd was all my own,
And in that parting hour alone
Reveal'd it to my sight.
And now what pangs will rend my soul,
Should fortune still, with stern control,
Forbid me this delight.

I know not if my bliss were vain,
For all the force of parting pain
Forbade suspicious doubts to reign,
When exiled from her sight:
Yet now what double woe for me,
Just at the close of eve, to see
The dayspring of delight.

SONNET 205.

"Quem diz que Amor he falso, o enganoso."

He who proclaims that Love is light and vain,
Capricious, cruel, false in all his ways;
Ah! sure too well hath merited his pain,
Too justly finds him all he thus portrays.

For Love is pitying, Love is soft and kind;
Believe not him who dares the tale oppose;
Oh! deem him one whom stormy passions blind,
One to whom earth and heaven may well be foes.

If Love bring evils, view them all in me!
Here let the world his utmost rigour see,
His utmost power exerted to annoy:
But all his ire is still the ire of love;
And such delight in all his woes I prove,
I would not change their pangs for aught of other joy!

SONNET 133.

"Doces e claras aguas do Mondego."

Waves of Mondego! brilliant and serene,
Haunts of my thought, where memory fondly strays;
Where hope allured me with perfidious mien,
Witching my soul, in long-departed days;

Yes, I forsake your banks! but still my heart
Shall bid remembrance all your charms restore,
And, suffering not one image to depart,
Find lengthening distance but endear you more.

Let Fortune's will, through many a future day,
To distant realms this mortal frame convey,
Sport of each wind, and tost on every wave;
Yet my fond soul, to pensive memory true,
On thought's light pinion still shall fly to you,
And still, bright waters! in your current lave.

SONNET 181.

"Onde acharei lugar taõ apartado."

WHERE shall I find some desert-scene so rude,
Where loneliness so undisturb'd may reign
That not a step shall ever there intrude
Of roving man, or nature's savage train?

Some tangled thicket, desolate and drear,
Or deep wild forest, silent as the tomb,
Boasting no verdure bright, no fountain clear,
But darkly suited to my spirit's gloom;

That there, 'midst frowning rocks, alone with grief
Entomb'd in life, and hopeless of relief,
In lonely freedom I may breathe my woes—
For, oh! since nought my sorrows can allay,
There shall my sadness cloud no festal day,
And days of gloom shall soothe me to repose.

SONNET 278.

"Eu vivia de lagrimas isento."

EXEMPT from every grief, 'twas mine to live
In dreams so sweet, enchantments so divine,
A thousand joys propitious Love can give
Were scarcely worth one rapturous pain of mine.

Bound by soft spells, in dear illusions blest,
I breathed no sigh for fortune or for power;
No care intruding to disturb my breast,
I dwelt entranced in Love's Elysian bower:

But Fate, such transports eager to destroy,
Soon rudely woke me from the dream of joy,
And bade the phantoms of delight begone;
Bade hope and happiness at once depart,
And left but memory to distract my heart,
Retracing every hour of bliss for ever flown.

"Mi nueve y dulce querella."

No searching eye can pierce the veil
That o'er my secret love is thrown;
No outward signs reveal its tale,
But to my bosom known.
Thus, like the spark, whose vivid light
In the dark flint is hid from sight,
It dwells within, alone.

METASTASIO.

"Dunque si sfoga in pianto."

In tears, the heart oppress'd with grief
Gives language to its woes;
In tears, its fulness finds relief,
When rapture's tide o'erflows!

Who then unclouded bliss would seek
On this terrestrial sphere;
When e'en Delight can only speak,
Like Sorrow—in a tear?

VINCENZO DA FILICAJA.

"Italia, Italia! O tu cui diè la sorte."

Italia, oh! Italia! thou, so graced
With ill-starr'd beauty, which to thee hath been
A dower, whose fatal splendour may be traced
In the deep-graven sorrows of thy mien;

Oh! that more strength, or fewer charms were thine,
That those might fear thee more, or love thee less,
Who seem to worship at thy radiant shrine,
Then pierce thee with the death-pang's bitterness!

Not *then* would foreign hosts have drain'd the tide
Of that Eridanus thy blood hath dyed;
Nor from the Alps would legions, still renew'd,
Pour down; nor wouldst thou wield an alien brand,
And fight thy battles with the stranger's hand,
Still, still a slave, victorious or subdued!

PASTORINI.

"Genova mia, se con asciutto ciglio."

If thus thy fallen grandeur I behold,
My native Genoa! with a tearless eye,
Think not thy son's ungrateful heart is cold,
But know — I deem rebellious every sigh!
Thy glorious ruins proudly I survey,
Trophies of firm resolve, of patriot might!
And in each trace of devastation's way,
Thy worth, thy courage, meet my wandering sight

Triumphs far less than suffering virtue shine!
And on the spoilers high revenge is thine,
While thy strong spirit unsubdued remains.
And lo! fair Liberty rejoicing flies,
To kiss each noble relic, while she cries,
"*Hail! though in ruins, thou wert ne'er in chains!*"

LOPE DE VEGA.

"Estese el cortesano."

Let the vain courtier waste his days,
Lured by the charms that wealth displays,
The couch of down, the board of costly fare;
Be his to kiss th' ungrateful hand
That waves the sceptre of command,
And rear full many a palace in the air;
Whilst I enjoy, all unconfined,
The glowing sun, the genial wind,
And tranquil hours, to rustic toil assign'd;
And prize far more, in peace and health,
Contented indigence than joyless wealth.

Not mine in Fortune's fane to bend,
At Grandeur's altar to attend,
Reflect his smile, and tremble at his frown;
Nor mine a fond aspiring thought,
A wish, a sigh, a vision, fraught
With Fame's bright phantom, Glory's deathless crown!
Nectareous draughts and viands pure,
Luxuriant nature will ensure;

These the clear fount, and fertile field,
Still to the wearied shepherd yield;
And when repose and visions reign,
Then we are equals all, the monarch and the swain.

FRANCISCO MANUEL.

ON ASCENDING A HILL LEADING TO A CONVENT.

"No baxes temeroso, o peregrino."

Pause not with lingering foot, O pilgrim, here;
Pierce the deep shadows of the mountain-side;
Firm be thy step, thy heart unknown to fear,
To brighter worlds this thorny path will guide.

Soon shall thy feet approach the calm abode,
So near the mansions of supreme delight;
Pause not—but tread this consecrated road,
'Tis the dark basis of the heavenly height.

Behold, to cheer thee on the toilsome way,
How many a fountain glitters down the hill!
Pure gales, inviting, softly round thee play,
Bright sunshine guides—and wilt thou linger still?
Oh! enter there, where, freed from human strife,
Hope is reality, and time is life.

DELLA CASA.

VENICE.

"Questi palazzi, e queste logge or colte."

These marble domes, by wealth and genius graced,
With sculptured forms, bright hues, and Parian stone,
Were once rude cabins 'midst a lonely waste,
Wild shores of solitude, and isles unknown.

Pure from each vice, 't was here a venturous train,
Fearless, in fragile barks explored the sea;
Not theirs a wish to conquer or to reign,
They sought these island precincts—to be free.

Ne'er in their souls ambition's flame arose,
No dream of avarice broke their calm repose;
Fraud, more than death, abhorr'd each artless breast:
Oh! now, since fortune gilds their brightening day,
Let not those virtues languish and decay,
O'erwhelm'd by luxury, and by wealth opprest!

IL MARCHESE CORNELIO BENTIVOGLIO.

"L'anima bella, che dal vero Eliso."

The sainted spirit, which, from bliss on high,
Descends, like dayspring, to my favour'd sight,
Shines in such noontide radiance of the sky,
Scarce do I know that form, intensely bright!

But, with the sweetness of her well-known smile,
That smile of peace! she bids my doubts depart,
And takes my hand, and softly speaks the while,
And heaven's full glory pictures to my heart.

Beams of that heaven in *her* my eyes behold,
And now, e'en now, in thought my wings unfold,
To soar with her, and mingle with the blest!
But ah! so swift her buoyant pinion flies,
That I, in vain aspiring to the skies,
Fall to my native sphere, by earthly bonds deprest.

METASTASIO.

"Al furor d'avversa Sorte."

He shall not dread Misfortune's angry mien,
Nor feebly sink beneath her tempest rude,
Whose soul hath learn'd, through many a trying scene,
To smile at fate, and suffer unsubdued.

In the rough school of billows, clouds, and storms,
Nursed and matured, the pilot learns his art:
Thus Fate's dread ire, by many a conflict, forms
The lofty spirit and enduring heart!

"Quella onda che ruina."

The torrent wave, that breaks with force
Impetuous down the Alpine height,
Complains and struggles in its course,
But sparkles, as the diamond bright.

The stream in shadowy valley deep,
May slumber in its narrow bed;
But silent, in unbroken sleep,
Its lustre and its life are fled.

"Leggiadra rosa, le cui pure foglie."

Sweet rose! whose tender foliage to expand
Her fostering dews, the morning lightly shed,
Whilst gales of balmy breath thy blossoms fann'd,
And o'er thy leaves the soft suffusion spread;

That hand, whose care withdrew thee from the ground,
To brighter worlds thy favour'd charms hath borne;
Thy fairest buds, with grace perennial crown'd,
There breathe and bloom, released from every thorn.

Thus, far removed, and now transplanted flower!
Exposed no more to blast or tempest rude,
Shelter'd with tenderest care from frost or shower,
And each rough season's chill vicissitude,
Now may thy form in bowers of peace assume
Immortal fragrance, and unwithering bloom.

"Che speri, instabil Dea, di sassi, e spine."

Fortune! why thus, where'er my footsteps tread,
Obstruct each path with rocks and thorns like these?
Think'st thou that *I* thy threatening mien shall dread
Or toil and pant thy waving locks to seize?

Reserve the frown severe, the menace rude,
For vassal-spirits that confess thy sway!
My constant soul should triumph unsubdued,
Were the wide universe destruction's prey.

Am I to conflicts new, in toils untried?
No! I have long thine utmost power defied,
And drawn fresh energies from every fight.
Thus from rude strokes of hammers and the wheel,
With each successive shock the temper'd steel
More keenly piercing proves, more dazzling bright.

"Parlagli d'un periglio."

Wouldst thou to Love of Danger speak?—
Veil'd are his eyes, to perils blind!
Wouldst thou from Love a reason seek?—
He is a child of wayward mind!

But with a doubt, a jealous fear,
Inspire him once—the task is o'er;
His mind is keen, his sight is clear,
No more an infant, blind no more.

"Sprezza il furor del vento."

Unbending 'midst the wintry skies,
Rears the firm oak his vigorous form,
And stern in rugged strength, defies
The rushing of the storm.

Then sever'd from his native shore,
O'er ocean-worlds the sail to bear,
Still with those winds he braved before,
He proudly struggles there.

"Sol può dir che sia contento."

Oh! those alone, whose sever'd hearts
Have mourn'd through ling'ring years in vain,
Can tell what bliss fond Love imparts,
When Fate unites them once again.

Sweet is the sigh, and blest the tear,
Whose language hails that moment bright,
When past afflictions but endear
The presence of delight!

"Ah! frenate le piante imbelle."

Ah! cease—those fruitless tears restrain,
I go misfortune to defy,
To smile at fate with proud disdain,
To triumph—not to die!

I with fresh laurels go, to crown
My closing days at last,
Securing all the bright renown
Acquired in dangers past.

QUEVEDO.

ROME BURIED IN HER OWN RUINS.

"Buscas en Roma á Roma, ó peregrino!"

Amidst these scenes, O pilgrim! seek'st thou Rome?
Vain is thy search—the pomp of Rome is fled;
Her silent Aventine is glory's tomb;
Her walls, her shrines, but relics of the dead.

That hill, where Cæsars dwelt in other days,
Forsaken mourns, where once it tower'd sublime;
Each mouldering medal now far less displays
The triumphs won by Latium, than by Time.

Tiber alone survives—the passing wave
That bathed her towers, now murmurs by her grave,
Wailing, with plaintive sound, her fallen fanes.
Rome! of thine ancient grandeur all is past,
That seem'd for years eternal framed to last,
Nought but the wave, a fugitive—remains.

EL CONDE JUAN DE TARSIS.

"Tu, que la dulce vida en tiernas anos."

Thou, who hast fled from life's enchanted bowers,
In youth's gay spring, in beauty's glowing morn,
Leaving thy bright array, thy path of flowers,
For the rude convent-garb, and couch of thorn;

Thou that, escaping from a world of cares,
Hast found thy haven in devotion's fane,
As to the port the fearful bark repairs,
To shun the midnight perils of the main;

Now the glad hymn, the strain of rapture pour,
While on thy soul the beams of glory rise!
For if the pilot hail the welcome shore,
With shouts of triumph swelling to the skies;
Oh! how shouldst *thou* the exulting pæan raise,
Now heaven's bright harbour opens on thy gaze!

TORQUATO TASSO.

"Negli anni acerbi tuoi, purpurea rosa."

Thou in thy morn wert like a glowing rose,
To the mild sunshine only half display'd,
That shunn'd its bashful graces to disclose,
And in its veil of verdure sought a shade:

Or like Aurora did thy charms appear
(Since mortal form ne'er vied with aught so bright)—
Aurora, smiling from her tranquil sphere,
O'er vale and mountain shedding dew and light.

Now riper years have doom'd no grace to fade;
Nor youthful charms, in all their pride array'd,
Excel, or equal, thy neglected form.
Thus, full expanded, lovelier is the flower,
And the bright day-star, in its noontide hour,
More brilliant shines, in genial radiance warm.

BERNARDO TASSO.

"Quest' ombra che giammai non vide il sole."

This green recess, where through the bowery gloom
Ne'er, e'en at noontide hours, the sunbeam play'd,
Where violet-beds in soft luxuriance bloom,
'Midst the cool freshness of the myrtle shade;

Where through the grass a sparkling fountain steals,
Whose murmuring wave, transparent as it flows,
No more its bed of yellow sand conceals,
Than the pure crystal hides the glowing rose;

This bower of peace, thou soother of our care,
God of soft slumbers, and of visions fair!
A lowly shepherd consecrates to thee!
Then breathe around some spell of deep repose,
And charm his eyes in balmy dew to close,
Those eyes, fatigued with grief, from tear-drops never free.

PETRARCH.

"Chi vuol veder quantunque può natura."

Thou that wouldst mark, in form of human birth,
All heaven and nature's perfect skill combined,
Come gaze on her, the day-star of the earth
Dazzling, not me alone, but all mankind:

And haste! for Death, who spares the guilty long,
First calls the brightest and the best away;
And to her home, amidst the cherub throng,
The angelic mortal flies, and will not stay!

Haste! and each outward charm, each mental grace,
In one consummate form thine eye shall trace,
Model of loveliness, for earth too fair!
Then thou shalt own how faint my votive lays,
My spirit dazzled by perfection's blaze:
But if thou still delay, for long regret prepare.

"Se lamentar augelli, o verdi fronde."

If to the sighing breeze of summer hours
Bend the green leaves; if mourns a plaintive bird;
Or from some fount's cool margin, fringed with flowers,
The soothing murmur of the wave is heard;

Her, whom the heavens reveal, the earth denies,
I see and hear; though dwelling far above,
Her spirit, still responsive to my sighs,
Visits the lone retreat of pensive love.

"Why thus in grief consume each fruitless day,"
(Her gentle accents thus benignly say),
"While from thine eyes the tear unceasing flows?
Weep not for me, who, hastening on my flight,
Died, to be deathless; and on heavenly light
Whose eyes but open'd, when they seem'd to close!"

VERSI SPAGNUOLI DI PIETRO BEMBO.

"O Muerte! que sueles ser."

Thou, the stern monarch of dismay,
Whom nature trembles to survey,
O Death! to me, the child of grief,
Thy welcome power would bring relief,
Changing to peaceful slumber many a care.
And though thy stroke may thrill with pain
Each throbbing pulse, each quivering vein;
The pangs that bid existence close,
Ah! sure are far less keen than those,
Which cloud its lingering moments with despair.

FRANCESCO LORENZINI.

"O Zefiretto, che movendo vai."

Sylph of the breeze! whose dewy pinions light
Wave gently round the tree I planted here,
Sacred to her, whose soul hath wing'd its flight
To the pure ether of her lofty sphere;

Be it thy care, soft spirit of the gale!
To fan its leaves in summer's noontide hour;
Be it thy care, that wintry tempests fail
To rend its honours from the sylvan bower.

Then shall it spread, and rear th' aspiring form,
Pride of the wood, secure from every storm,

Graced with her name, a consecrated tree!
So may thy Lord, thy monarch of the wind,
Ne'er with rude chains thy tender pinions bind,
But grant thee still to rove, a wanderer wild and free

GESNER.

MORNING SONG.

"Willkommen, fruhe morgensonn."

Hail! morning sun, thus early bright;
Welcome, sweet dawn! thou younger day!
Through the dark woods that fringe the height,
Beams forth, e'en now, thy ray.

Bright on the dew, it sparkles clear,
Bright on the water's glittering fall,
And life, and joy, and health appear,
Sweet morning! at thy call.

Now thy fresh breezes lightly spring
From beds of fragrance, where they lay,
And roving wild on dewy wing,
Drive slumber far away.

Fantastic dreams, in swift retreat,
Now from each mind withdraw their spell,
While the young loves delighted meet,
On Rosa's cheek to dwell.

Speed, zephyr! kiss each opening flower,
Its fragrant spirit make thine own;
Then wing thy way to Rosa's bower,
Ere her light sleep is flown.

There, o'er her downy pillow fly,
Wake the sweet maid to life and day;
Breathe on her balmy lip a sigh,
And o'er her bosom play;

And whisper, when her eyes unveil,
That I, since morning's earliest call,
Have sigh'd her name to ev'ry gale,
By the lone waterfall.

GERMAN SONG.

"Madchen, lernet Amor kennen."

Listen, fair maid, my song shall tell
How Love may still be known full well,
His looks the traitor prove.
Dost thou not see that absent smile,
That fiery glance replete with guile?
Oh! doubt not then—'tis Love.

When varying still the sly disguise,
Child of caprice, he laughs and cries,
Or with complaint would move;
To-day is bold, to-morrow shy,
Changing each hour, he knows not why,
Oh! doubt not then—'tis Love.

There's magic in his every wile,
His lips, well practised to beguile,
Breathe roses when they move;
See, now with sudden rage he burns,
Disdains, implores, commands, by turns;
Oh! doubt not then—'tis Love.

He comes, without the bow and dart,
That spares not e'en the purest heart;
His looks the traitor prove;
That glance is fire, that mien is guile,
Deceit is lurking in that smile,
Oh! trust him not—'tis love!

CHAULIEU.

"Grotte, d'ou sort ce clair ruisseau."

Thou grot, whence flows this limpid spring,
Its margin fringed with moss and flowers,
Still bid its voice of murmurs bring
Peace to my musing hours.

Sweet Fontenay! where first for me
The dayspring of existence rose,
Soon shall my dust return to thee,
And 'midst my sires repose.

Muses, that watch'd my childhood's morn,
'Midst these wild haunts, with guardian eye,
Fair trees, that here beheld me born,
Soon shall ye see me die.

GARCILASO DE VEGA.

"Coyed de vuestra alegre primavera."

Enjoy the sweets of life's luxuriant May,
Ere envious Age is hastening on his way
With snowy wreaths to crown the beauteous brow
The rose will fade when storms assail the year,
And Time, who changeth not his swift career,
Constant in this, will change all else below!

LORENZO DE' MEDICI

VIOLETS.

"Non di verdi giardin ornati e colti."

We come not, fair one, to thy hand of snow,
From the soft scenes by Culture's hand array'd;
Not rear'd in bowers where gales of fragrance blow,
But in dark glens, and depths of forest shade!

There once, as Venus wander'd, lost in woe,
To seek Adonis through th' entangled wood,
Piercing her foot, a thorn that lurk'd below,
With print relentless drew celestial blood!

Then our light stems, with snowy blossoms fraught,
Bending to earth, each precious drop we caught,
Imbibing thence our bright purpureal dyes;
We were not foster'd in our shadowy vales,
By guided rivulets, or summer gales—
Our dew and air have been, Love's balmy tears and sighs!

PINDEMONTE.

ON THE HEBE OF CANOVA.

"Dove per te, celeste ancilla, or vassi?"

Whither, celestial maid, so fast away?
What lures thee from the banquet of the skies?
How canst thou leave thy native realms of day,
For this low sphere, this vale of clouds and sighs?

O thou, Canova! soaring high above
Italian art—with Grecian magic vying!
We knew thy marble glow'd with life and love,
But who had seen thee image footsteps flying?

Here to each eye the wind seems gently playing
With the light vest, its wavy folds arraying
In many a line of undulating grace;
While Nature, ne'er her mighty laws suspending,
Stands, before marble thus with motion blending,
One moment lost in thought, its hidden cause to trace.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

LINES

WRITTEN IN A HERMITAGE ON THE SEASHORE.

O WANDERER! would thy heart forget
Each earthly passion and regret,
And would thy wearied spirit rise
To commune with its native skies;
Pause for a while, and deem it sweet
To linger in this calm retreat;
And give thy cares, thy griefs, a short suspense,
Amidst wild scenes of lone magnificence.

Unmix'd with aught of meaner tone,
Here nature's voice is heard alone:
When the loud storm, in wrathful hour,
Is rushing on its wing of power,
And spirits of the deep awake,
And surges foam, and billows break,
And rocks and ocean-caves around,
Reverberate each awful sound;
That mighty voice, with all its dread control,
To loftiest thought shall wake thy thrilling soul.

But when no more the sea-winds rave,
When peace is brooding on the wave,
And from earth, air, and ocean rise
No sounds but plaintive melodies;
Soothed by their softly mingling swell,
As daylight bids the world farewell,
The rustling wood, the dying breeze,
The faint, low rippling of the seas,
A tender calm shall steal upon thy breast,
A gleam reflected from the realms of rest.

Is thine a heart the world hath stung,
Friends have deceived, neglect hath wrung?
Hast thou some grief that none may know,
Some lonely, secret, silent woe?
Or have thy fond affections fled
From earth, to slumber with the dead?—
Oh! pause awhile—the world disown,
And dwell with nature's self alone!
And though no more she bids arise
Thy soul's departed energies,
And though thy joy of life is o'er,
Beyond her magic to restore;
Yet shall her spells o'er every passion steal,
And soothe the wounded heart they cannot heal.

DIRGE OF A CHILD.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,
Blossom of being! seen and gone!
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
O blest departed One!
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blush'd into dawn and pass'd away.

Yes! thou art fled, ere guilt had power
To stain thy cherub-soul and form,
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower,
That never felt a storm!
The sunbeam's smile, the zephyr's breath,
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,
That heaven benignly call'd thee hence,
Ere yet the world could breathe one blight
O'er thy sweet innocence:
And thou, that brighter home to bless,
Art pass'd, with all thy loveliness!

Oh! hadst thou still on earth remain'd,
Vision of beauty! fair, as brief!
How soon thy brightness had been stain'd
With passion or with grief!
Now not a sullying breath can rise,
To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb;
No sculptured image there shall mourn;
Ah! fitter far the vernal bloom
Such dwelling to adorn.
Fragrance, and flowers, and dews, must be
The only emblems meet for thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,
Adorn'd with Nature's brightest wreath;
Each glowing season shall combine
Its incense there to breathe;
And oft, upon the midnight air,
Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

And oh! sometimes in visions blest,
Sweet spirit! visit our repose;
And bear, from thine own world of rest,
Some balm for human woes!
What form more lovely could be given
Than thine to messenger of heaven?[1]

INVOCATION.

Hush'd is the world in night and sleep,
Earth, Sea, and Air, are still as death;
Too rude to break a calm so deep,
Were music's faintest breath.
Descend, bright Visions! from aërial bowers,
Descend to gild your own soft, silent hours.

[1] Vide Annotation from *Quarterly Review*, page 287.

In hope or fear, in toil or pain,
The weary day have mortals past;
Now, dreams of bliss! be yours to reign,
And all your spells around them cast;
Steal from their hearts the pang, their eyes the tear,
And lift the veil that hides a brighter sphere.

O! bear your softest balm to those,
Who fondly, vainly, mourn the dead,
To them that world of peace disclose,
Where the bright soul is fled:
Where Love, immortal in his native clime,
Shall fear no pang from fate, no blight from time.

Or to his loved, his distant land,
On your light wings the exile bear;
To feel once more his heart expand,
In his own genial mountain-air;
Hear the wild echoes' well-known strains repeat,
And bless each note, as Heaven's own music sweet.

But oh! with Fancy's brightest ray,
Blest dreams! the bard's repose illume;
Bid forms of heaven around him play,
And bowers of Eden bloom!
And waft *his* spirit to its native skies
Who finds no charm in life's realities.

No voice is on the air of night,
Through folded leaves no murmurs creep,
Nor star nor moonbeam's trembling light
Falls on the placid brow of sleep.

Descend, bright visions! from your airy bower:
Dark, silent, solemn, is your favourite hour.

TO THE MEMORY OF

GENERAL SIR E—D P—K—M.

Brave spirit! mourn'd with fond regret,
Lost in life's pride, in valour's noon,
Oh! who could deem *thy* star should set
So darkly and so soon!

Fatal, though bright, the fire of mind
Which mark'd and closed thy brief career,
And the fair wreath, by Hope entwined,
Lies wither'd on thy bier.

The soldier's death hath been thy doom,
The soldier's tear thy meed shall be;
Yet, son of war! a prouder tomb
Might Fate have rear'd for thee.

Thou shouldst have died, O high-soul'd chief!
In those bright days of glory fled,
When triumph so prevail'd o'er grief,
We scarce could mourn the dead.

Noontide of fame! each tear-drop then
Was worthy of a warrior's grave:
When shall affection weep again
So proudly o'er the brave?

There, on the battle-fields of Spain,
'Midst Roncesvalles' mountain-scene,
Or on Vittoria's blood-red plain,
Meet had thy deathbed been.

We mourn not that a hero's life
Thus in its ardent prime should close;
Hadst thou but fallen in nobler strife,
But died 'midst conquer'd foes!

Yet hast thou still (though victory's flame
In that last moment cheer'd thee not)
Left Glory's isle another name,
That ne'er may be forgot:

And many a tale of triumph won,
Shall breathe that name in Memory's ear
And long may England mourn a son
Without reproach or fear.

TO THE MEMORY OF

SIR H—Y E—LL—S.

WHO FELL IN THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

"Happy are they who die in youth when their renown is around them.'
—— OSSIAN.

WEEP'ST thou for him, whose doom was seal'd
On England's proudest battle-field?
For him, the lion-heart, who died
In victory's full resistless tide?

Oh, mourn him not!
By deeds like his that field was won,
And Fate could yield to Valour's son
No brighter lot.

He heard his band's exulting cry,
He saw the vanquish'd eagles fly;
And envied be his death of fame,
It shed a sunbeam o'er his name
That nought shall dim:
No cloud obscured his glory's day,
It saw no twilight of decay—
Weep not for him!

And breathe no dirge's plaintive moan,
A hero claims far loftier tone!
Oh! proudly should the war-song swell,
Recording how the mighty fell
In that dread hour,
When England, 'midst the battle-storm—
Th' avenging angel—rear'd her form
In tenfold power.

Yet, gallant heart! to swell thy praise,
Vain were the minstrel's noblest lays;
Since he, the soldier's guiding-star,
The Victor-chief, the lord of war,
Has own'd thy fame:
And oh! like *his* approving word,
What trophied marble could record
A warrior's name?

GUERILLA SONG.

FOUNDED ON THE STORY RELATED OF THE SPANISH PATRIOT MINA.

Oh! forget not the hour, when through forest and vale,
We return'd with our chief to his dear native halls!
Through the woody Sierra there sigh'd not a gale,
And the moonbeam was bright on his battlement-walls;
And nature lay sleeping in calmness and light,
Round the home of the valiant, that rose on our sight.

We enter'd that home—all was loneliness round,
The stillness, the darkness, the peace of the grave;
Not a voice, not a step, bade its echoes resound,
Ah! such was the welcome that waited the brave!
For the spoilers had pass'd, like the poison-wind's breath,
And the loved of his bosom lay silent in death.

Oh! forget not that hour—let its image be near,
In the light of our mirth, in the dreams of our rest,
Let its tale awake feelings too deep for a tear,
And rouse into vengeance each arm and each breast,
Till cloudless the dayspring of liberty shine
O'er the plains of the olive, and hills of the vine.

THE AGED INDIAN.

Warriors! my noon of life is past,
The brightness of my spirit flown;
I crouch before the wintry blast,
Amidst my tribe I dwell alone;
The heroes of my youth are fled,
They rest among the warlike dead.

Ye slumberers of the narrow cave!
My kindred-chiefs in days of yore,
Ye fill an unremember'd grave,
Your fame, your deeds, are known no more.
The records of your wars are gone,
Your names forgot by all but one.

Soon shall that one depart from earth,
To join the brethren of his prime;
Then will the memory of your birth
Sleep with the hidden things of time.
With him, ye sons of former days!
Fades the last glimmering of your praise.

His eyes, that hail'd your spirits' flame,
Still kindling in the combat's shock,
Have seen, since darkness veil'd your fame,
Sons of the desert and the rock!
Another, and another race,
Rise to the battle and the chase.

Descendants of the mighty dead!
Fearless of heart, and firm of hand!
O! let me join their spirits fled,
O! send me to their shadowy land.
Age hath not tamed Ontara's heart,
He shrinks not from the friendly dart.

These feet no more can chase the deer,
The glory of this arm is flown;—
Why should the feeble linger here,
When all the pride of life is gone?
Warriors! why still the stroke deny,
Think ye Ontara fears to die?

He fear'd not in his flower of days,
When strong to stem the torrent's force,
When through the desert's pathless maze,
His way was as an eagle's course!
When war was sunshine to his sight,
And the wild hurricane, delight!

Shall then the warrior tremble *now?*
Now when his envied strength is o'er?
Hung on the pine his idle bow,
His pirogue useless on the shore?
When age hath dimm'd his failing eye,
Shall he, the joyless, fear to die?

Sons of the brave! delay no more,
The spirits of my kindred call;
'Tis but one pang, and all is o'er!
Oh! bid the aged cedar fall!
To join the brethren of his prime,
The mighty of departed time.

EVENING AMONGST THE ALPS.

Soft skies of Italy! how richly drest,
Smile these wild scenes in your purpureal glow!
What glorious hues, reflected from the west,
Float o'er the dwellings of eternal snow!

Yon torrent, foaming down the granite steep,
Sparkles all brilliance in the setting beam;
Dark glens beneath in shadowy beauty sleep,
Where pipes the goatherd by his mountain-stream.

Now from yon peak departs the vivid ray,
That still at eve its lofty temple knows;
From rock and torrent fade the tints away,
And all is wrapt in twilight's deep repose:
While through the pine-wood gleams the vesper star,
And roves the Alpine gale o'er solitudes afar.

DIRGE OF THE HIGHLAND CHIEF IN "WAVERLEY."

Son of the mighty and the free!
High-minded leader of the brave!
Was it for lofty chief like thee,
To fill a nameless grave?
Oh! if amidst the valiant slain,
The warrior's bier had been thy lot,
E'en though on red Culloden's plain,
We then had mourn'd thee not.

But darkly closed thy dawn of fame,
That dawn whose sunbeam rose so fair;
Vengeance alone may breathe thy name,
The watchword of despair!
Yet oh! if gallant spirit's power
Hath e'er ennobled death like thine,
Then glory mark'd *thy* parting hour,
Last of a mighty line!

O'er thy own towers the sunshine falls,
But cannot chase their silent gloom;
Those beams that gild thy native walls
Are sleeping on thy tomb!
Spring on thy mountains laughs the while,
Thy green woods wave in vernal air,
But the loved scenes may vainly smile:
Not e'en thy dust is there.

On thy blue hills no bugle-sound
Is mingling with the torrent's roar,
Unmark'd, the wild deer sport around:
Thou lead'st the chase no more!
Thy gates are closed, thy halls are still,
Those halls where peal'd the choral stream;
They hear the wind's deep murmuring thrill,
And all is hush'd again.

No banner from the lonely tower
Shall wave its blazon'd folds on high;
There the tall grass, and summer flower,
Unmark'd shall spring and die.

No more thy bard, for other ear,
Shall wake the harp once loved by thine—
Hush'd be the strain *thou* canst not hear,
Last of a mighty line!

THE CRUSADERS' WAR-SONG

Chieftains, lead on! our hearts beat high,
Lead on to Salem's towers!
Who would not deem it bliss to die,
Slain in a cause like ours?
The brave who sleep in soil of thine,
Die not entomb'd but shrined, O Palestine!

Souls of the slain in holy war!
Look from your sainted rest.
Tell us ye rose in Glory's car,
To mingle with the blest;
Tell us how short the death-pang's power,
How bright the joys of your immortal bower.

Strike the loud harp, ye minstrel train!
Pour forth your loftiest lays;
Each heart shall echo to the strain
Breathed in the warrior's praise.
Bid every string triumphant swell
Th' inspiring sounds that heroes love so well.

Salem! amidst the fiercest hour,
The wildest rage of fight,
Thy name shall lend our falchions power,
And nerve our hearts with might.

Envied be those for thee that fall,
Who find their graves beneath thy sacred wall.

For them no need that sculptured tomb
Should chronicle their fame,
Or pyramid record their doom,
Or deathless verse their name;
It is enough that dust of thine
Should shroud their forms, O blessed Palestine!

Chieftains, lead on! our hearts beat high
For combat's glorious hour;
Soon shall the red-cross banner fly
On Salem's loftiest tower!
We burn to mingle in the strife,
Where *but* to die ensures eternal life.

THE DEATH OF CLANRONALD.

It was in the battle of Sheriffmoor that young Clanronald fell, leading on the Highlanders of the right wing. His death dispirited the assailants, who began to waver. But Glengary, chief of a rival branch of the Clan Colla, started from the ranks, and, waving his bonnet round his head, cried out, "To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for mourning!" The Highlanders received a new impulse from his words, and, charging with redoubled fury, bore down all before them. — See the *Quarterly Review* article of "Culloden Papers."

Oh! ne'er be Clanronald the valiant forgot!
Still fearless and first in the combat, he fell;
But we paused not one tear-drop to shed o'er the spot,
We spared not one moment to murmur "Farewell."

We heard but the battle-word given by the chief,
"To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief!"

And wildly, Clanronald! we echo'd the vow,
With the tear on our cheek, and the sword in our hand;
Young son of the brave! we may weep for thee now,
For well has thy death been avenged by thy band,
When they join'd, in wild chorus, the cry of the chief,
"To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief!"

Thy dirge in that hour was the bugle's wild call,
The clash of the claymore, the shout of the brave;
But now thy own bard may lament for thy fall,
And the soft voice of melody sigh o'er thy grave—
While Albyn remembers the words of the chief,
"To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief!"

Thou art fallen, O fearless one! flower of thy race:
Descendant of heroes! thy glory is set:
But thy kindred, the sons of the battle and chase,
Have proved that thy spirit is bright in them yet!
Nor vainly have echo'd the words of the chief,
"To-day for revenge, and to-morrow for grief!"

TO THE EYE.

Throne of expression! whence the spirit's ray
Pours forth so oft the light of mental day,
Where fancy's fire, affection's melting beam,
Thought, genius, passion, reign in turn supreme,

And many a feeling, words can ne'er impart,
Finds its own language to pervade the heart;
Thy power, bright orb, what bosom hath not felt,
To thrill, to rouse, to fascinate, to melt!
And by some spell of undefined control,
With magnet-influence touch the secret soul!

Light of the features! in the morn of youth
Thy glance is nature, and thy language, truth;
And ere the world, with all-corrupting sway,
Hath taught e'en *thee* to flatter and betray,
Th' ingenuous heart forbids thee to reveal,
Or speak one thought that interest would conceal;
While yet thou seem'st the cloudless mirror, given
But to reflect the purity of heaven;
O! then how lovely, there unveil'd, to trace
Th' unsullied brightness of each mental grace!

When Genius lends thee all his living light,
Where the full beams of intellect unite;
When love illumes thee with his varying ray,
Where trembling Hope and tearful Rapture play
Or Pity's melting cloud thy beam subdues,
Tempering its lustre with a veil of dews;
Still does thy power, whose all-commanding spell
Can pierce the mazes of the soul so well,
Bid some new feeling to existence start,
From its deep slumbers in the inmost heart.

And O! when thought, in ecstasy sublime,
That soars triumphant o'er the bounds of time,
Fires thy keen glance with inspiration's blaze,
The light of heaven, the hope of nobler days,

(As glorious dreams, for utterance far too high,
Flash through the mist of dim mortality;)
Who does not own, that through thy lightning-beams
A flame unquenchable, unearthly, streams?
That pure, though captive effluence of the sky,
The vestal-ray, the spark that cannot die!

THE HERO'S DEATH.

Life's parting beams were in his eye,
Life's closing accents on his tongue,
When round him, pealing to the sky,
The shout of victory rung!

Then, ere his gallant spirit fled,
A smile so bright illumed his face—
Oh! never, of the light it shed,
Shall memory lose a trace!

His was a death, whose rapture high
Transcended all that life could yield;
His warmest prayer was so to die,
On the red battle-field!

And they may feel, who loved him most,
A pride so holy and so pure:
Fate hath no power o'er those who boast
A treasure thus secure!

STANZAS

ON

THE LATE NATIONAL CALAMITY,

THE DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

"Hélas! nous composions son histoire de tout ce qu'on peut imaginer de plus glorieux —— Le passé et le présent nous garantissoient l'avenir —— Telle étoit l'agréable histoire que nous faisions; et pour achever ces nobles projets, il n'y avoit que la durée de sa vie; dont nous ne croyions pas devoir être en peine, car, qui eût pu seulement penser, que les années eussent dû manquer, á une jeunesse qui sembloit si vive?" —— BOSSUET.

I.

MARK'D ye the mingling of the city's throng,
Each mien, each glance, with expectation bright?
Prepare the pageant, and the choral song,
The pealing chimes, the blaze of festal light!
And hark! what rumour's gathering sound is nigh?
Is it the voice of joy, that murmur deep?
Away! be hush'd! ye sounds of revelry!
Back to your homes, ye multitudes, to weep!
Weep! for the storm hath o'er us darkly past,
And England's royal flower is broken by the blast!

II.

Was it a dream? so sudden and so dread
That awful fiat o'er our senses came!
So loved, so blest, is that young spirit fled,
Whose early grandeur promised years of fame?

Oh! when hath life possess'd, or death destroy'd
More lovely hopes, more cloudlessly that smiled?
When hath the spoiler left so dark a void?
For all is lost—the mother and her child!
Our morning-star hath vanish'd, and the tomb
Throws its deep lengthen'd shade o'er distant years to come.

III.

Angel of Death! did no presaging sign
Announce thy coming, and thy way prepare?
No warning voice, no harbinger was thine,
Danger and fear seem'd past—but thou wert there!
Prophetic sounds along the earthquake's path
Foretell the hour of nature's awful throes;
And the volcano, ere it burst in wrath,
Sends forth some herald from its dread repose:
But *thou*, dark Spirit! swift and unforeseen,
Cam'st like the lightning's flash, when heaven is all serene.

IV.

And she is gone—the royal and the young,
In soul commanding, and in heart benign;
Who, from a race of kings and heroes sprung,
Glow'd with a spirit lofty as her line.
Now may the voice she loved on earth so well,
Breathe forth her name, unheeded and in vain;
Nor can those eyes on which her own would dwell,
Wake from that breast one sympathy again:
The ardent heart, the towering mind are fled,
Yet shall undying love still linger with the dead.

V.

Oh! many a bright existence we have seen
Quench'd, in the glow and fulness of its prime:
And many a cherish'd flower, ere now, hath been
Cropt, ere its leaves were breathed upon by time.
We have lost heroes in their noon of pride,
Whose fields of triumph gave them but a bier;
And we have wept when soaring genius died,
Check'd in the glory of his mid career!
But here our hopes were center'd—all is o'er,
All thought in this absorb'd—she was—and is no more!

VI.

We watch'd her childhood from its earliest hour,
From every word and look blest omens caught;
While that young mind developed all its power,
And rose to energies of loftiest thought.
On her was fix'd the patriot's ardent eye,
And hope still bloom'd—one vista still was fair;
And when the tempest swept the troubled sky,
She was our day-spring—all was cloudless *there;*
And oh! how lovely broke on England's gaze,
E'en through the mist and storm, the light of distant days.

VII.

Now hath one moment darken'd future years,
And changed the track of ages yet to be!—
Yet, mortal! 'midst the bitterness of tears,
Kneel, and adore th' inscrutable decree!

Oh! while the clear perspective smiled in light,
Wisdom should *then* have temper'd hope's excess,
And, lost One! when we saw thy lot so bright,
We might have trembled at its loveliness:
Joy is no earthly flower — nor framed to bear,
In its exotic bloom, life's cold ungenial air.

VIII.

All smiled around thee — Youth, and Love, and Praise,
Hearts all devotion and all truth were thine!
On thee was riveted a nation's gaze,
As on some radiant and unsullied shrine.
Heiress of empires! thou art pass'd away,
Like some fair vision, that arose to throw,
O'er one brief hour of life, a fleeting ray,
Then leave the rest to solitude and woe!
Oh! who shall dare to woo such dreams again!
Who hath not wept to know, that tears for thee were vain?

IX.

Yet there is one who loved thee — and whose soul
With mild affections nature form'd to melt;
His mind hath bow'd beneath the stern control
Of many a grief — but *this* shall be unfelt!
Years have gone by — and given his honour'd head
A diadem of snow — his eye is dim —
Around him Heaven a solemn cloud hath spread,
The past, the future, are a dream to him!
Yet, in the darkness of his fate, alone
He dwells on earth, while thou, in life's full pride art gone!

X.

The Chastener's hand is on us—we may weep,
But not repine—for many a storm hath past,
And, pillow'd on her own majestic deep,
Hath England slept, unshaken by the blast!
And War hath raged o'er many a distant plain,
Trampling the vine and olive in his path;
While she, that regal daughter of the main,
Smiled, in serene defiance of his wrath!
As some proud summit, mingling with the sky,
Hears calmly far below the thunders roll and die.

XI.

Her voice hath been th' awakener—and her name
The gathering-word of nations—in her might,
And all the awful beauty of her fame,
Apart she dwelt, in solitary light.
High on her cliffs, alone and firm she stood,
Fixing the torch upon her beacon-tower;
That torch, whose flame, far streaming o'er the flood,
Hath guided Europe through her darkest hour.
Away, vain dreams of glory!—in the dust
Be humbled, ocean-queen! and own thy sentence just!

XII.

Hark! 'twas the death-bell's note! which, full and deep,
Unmix'd with aught of less majestic tone,
While all the murmurs of existence sleep,
Swell'd on the stillness of the air alone!

Silent the throngs that fill the darken'd street,
Silent the slumbering Thames, the lonely mart;
And all is still, where countless thousands meet,
Save the full throbbing of the awe-struck heart!
All deeply, strangely, fearfully serene,
As in each ravaged home th' avenging one had been.

XIII.

The sun goes down in beauty—his farewell,
Unlike the world he leaves, is calmly bright;
And his last mellow'd rays around us dwell,
Lingering, as if on scenes of young delight.
They smile and fade—but, when the day is o'er,
What slow procession moves, with measured tread?—
Lo! those who weep, with her who weeps no more,
A solemn train—the mourners and the dead?
While, throned on high, the moon's untroubled ray
Looks down, as earthly hopes are passing thus away.

XIV.

But other light is in that holy pile,
Where, in the house of silence, kings repose;
There, through the dim arcade, and pillar'd aisle,
The funeral torch its deep-red radiance throws.
There pall, and canopy, and sacred strain,
And all around the stamp of woe may bear;
But Grief, to whose full heart those forms are vain,
Grief unexpress'd, unsoothed by them—is there.
No darker hour hath Fate for him who mourns,
Than when the all he loved, as dust, to dust returns.

XV.

We mourn—but not *thy* fate, departed One!
We pity—but the living, not the dead;
A cloud hangs o'er us—[1] "the bright day is done,"
And with a father's hopes, a nation's fled.
And he, the chosen of thy youthful breast,
Whose soul with thine had mingled every thought;
He, with thine early fond affections blest,
Lord of a mind with all things lovely fraught;
What but a desert to his eye, that earth,
Which but retains of thee the memory of thy worth?

XVI.

Oh! there are griefs for nature too intense,
Whose first rude shock but stupifies the soul;
Nor hath the fragile and o'erlabour'd sense
Strength e'en to *feel*, at once, their dread control.
But when 'tis past, that still and speechless hour
Of the seal'd bosom, and the tearless eye,
Then the roused mind awakes, with tenfold power
To grasp the fulness of its agony!
Its death-like torpor vanish'd—and its doom;
To cast its own dark hues o'er light and nature's bloom.

XVII.

And such *his* lot, whom thou hast loved and left,
Spirit! thus early to thy home recall'd!
So sinks the heart, of hope and thee bereft,
A warrior's heart, which danger ne'er appall'd.

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[1] "The bright day is done,
And we are for the dark."—SHAKSPEARE.

Years may pass on—and, as they roll along,
Mellow those pangs which now his bosom rend;
And he once more, with life's unheeding throng,
May, though alone in soul, in seeming blend;
Yet still, the guardian-angel of his mind
Shall thy loved image dwell, in Memory's temple shrined.

XVIII.

Yet must the days be long ere time shall steal
Aught from his grief whose spirit dwells with thee;
Once deeply bruised, the heart at length may heal,
But all it was—oh! never more shall be.
The flower, the leaf, o'erwhelm'd by winter snow,
Shall spring again, when beams and showers return;
The faded cheek again with health may glow,
And the dim eye with life's warm radiance burn;
But the pure freshness of the mind's young bloom,
Once lost, revives alone in worlds beyond the tomb.

XIX.

But thou—thine hour of agony is o'er,
And thy brief race in brilliance hath been run,
While Faith, that bids fond nature grieve no more,
Tells that thy crown—though not on earth—is won.
Thou, of the world so early left, hast known
Nought but the bloom and sunshine—and for thee,
Child of propitious stars! for thee alone,
The course of love ran smooth,[1] and brightly free—

[1] "The course of true love never did run smooth."
SHAKSPEARE.

Not long such bliss to mortal could be given,
It is enough for earth to catch one glimpse of heaven.

XX.

What though, ere yet the noonday of thy fame
Rose in its glory on thine England's eye,
The grave's deep shadows o'er thy prospect came?
Ours is that loss—and thou wert blest to die!
Thou might'st have lived to dark and evil years,
To mourn thy people changed, thy skies o'ercast;
But thy spring morn was all undimm'd by tears,
And thou wert loved and cherish'd to the last!
And thy young name, ne'er breathed in ruder tone,
Thus dying, thou hast left to love and grief alone.

XXI.

Daughter of Kings! from that high sphere look down,
Where still in hope, affection's thoughts may rise;
Where dimly shines to thee that mortal crown,
Which earth display'd to claim thee from the skies.
Look down! and if thy spirit yet retain
Memory of aught that once was fondly dear,
Soothe, though unseen, the hearts that mourn in vain,
And, in their hours of loneliness—be near!
Blest was thy lot e'en here—and one faint sigh,
Oh! tell those hearts, hath made that bliss eternity!

Nov. 23, 1817.

ITALIAN LITERATURE.

ITALIAN LITERATURE.

THE BASVIGLIANA OF MONTI.

FROM SISMONDI'S "LITTERATURE DU MIDI."

Vincenzo Monti, a native of Ferrara, is acknowledged, by the unanimous consent of the Italians, as the greatest of their living poets. Irritable, impassioned, variable to excess, he is always actuated by the impulse of the moment. Whatever he feels, is felt with the most enthusiastic vehemence. He sees the objects of his thoughts—they are present, and clothed with life—before him, and a flexible and harmonious language is always at his command to paint them with the richest colouring. Persuaded that poetry is only another species of painting, he makes the art of the poet consist in rendering apparent to the eyes of all the pictures created by his imagination for himself; and he permits not a verse to escape him which does not contain an image. Deeply impressed by the study of Dante, he has restored to the character of Italian poetry those severe and exalted beauties by which it was distinguished at its birth; and he proceeds from one picture to another with a grandeur and dignity peculiar to himself. It is extraordinary

that, with something so lofty in his manner and style of writing, the heart of so impassioned a character should not be regulated by principles of greater consistency. In many other poets, this defect might pass unobserved: but circumstances have thrown the fullest light upon the versatility of Monti; and his glory, as a poet, is attached to works which display him in continual opposition to himself. Writing in the midst of the various Italian revolutions, he has constantly chosen political subjects for his compositions, and he has successively celebrated opposite parties in proportion to their success. Let us suppose, in his justification, that he composes as an improvisatore, and that his feelings, becoming highly excited by the given theme, he seizes the political ideas it suggests, however foreign they may be to his individual sentiments.[1] In these political poems—the object and purport of which are so different—the invention and manner are, perhaps, but too similar. The *Basvigliana*, or poem on the death of Basville, is the most celebrated; but, since its appearance, it has been discovered that Monti,

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[1] The observation of a French author (*Le Censeur du Dictionnaire des Girouettes*) on the general versatility of poets, seems so peculiarly appropriate to the character of Monti, that it might almost be supposed to have been written for the express purpose of such an application. — "Le cerveau d'un poète est d'une cire molle et flexible, où s'imprime naturellement tout ce qui le flatte, le séduit, et l'alimente. La muse du chant n'a pas de partie; c'est une étourdie sans consequence, qui folâtre également et sur de riches gazons et sur d'arides bruyères. Un poète en délire chante indifferement Titus et Thamask, Louis 12me et Cromwell, Christine de Suéde, et Stanchon la Vielleuse.

who always imitated Dante, has now also very frequently imitated himself.

Hugh Basville was the French Envoy who was put to death at Rome by the people, for attempting, at the beginning of the Revolution, to excite a sedition against the Pontifical government. Monti, who was then the poet of the Pope, as he has since been of the Republic, supposes that, at the moment of Basville's death, he is saved by a sudden repentance, from the condemnation which his philosophical principles had merited. But, as a punishment for his guilt, and a substitute for the pains of purgatory, he is condemned by Divine Justice to traverse France, until the crimes of that country have received their due chastisement, and doomed to contemplate the misfortunes and reverses to which he has contributed, by assisting to extend the progress of the Revolution.

An angel of heaven conducts Basville from province to province, that he may behold the desolation of his lovely country. He then conveys him to Paris, and makes him witness the sufferings and death of Louis XVI., and afterwards shows him the Allied armies prepared to burst upon France, and avenge the blood of her king. The poem concludes before the issue of the contest is known. It is divided into four cantos of three hundred lines each, and written in *terza rima*, like the poem of Dante. Not only many expressions, epithets, and lines, are borrowed from the Divine Comedy, but the invention itself is similar. An angel conducts Basville through the suffering world; and this faithful guide, who consoles and supports the *spectator-hero* of the poem, acts precisely the same part which is per-

formed by Virgil in Dante. Basville himself, thinks, feels, and suffers, exactly as Dante would have done. Monti has not preserved any traces of his revolutionary character; he describes him as feeling more pity than remorse, and he seems to forget, in thus identifying himself with his hero, that he has at first represented Basville, and perhaps without foundation, as an infidel and a ferocious revolutionist. The *Basvigliana* is, perhaps, more remarkable than any other poem for the majesty of its verse, the sublimity of its expression, and the richness of its colouring. In the first canto, the spirit of Basville thus takes leave of the body:—

Sleep, O beloved companion of my woes,
Rest thou in deep and undisturb'd repose;
Till, at the last great day, from slumber's bed,
Heaven's trumpet-summons shall awake the dead.

Be the earth light upon thee, mild the shower,
And soft the breeze's wing, till that dread hour;
Nor let the wand'rer, passing o'er thee, breathe
Words of keen insult to the dust beneath.

Sleep thou in peace! beyond the funeral pyre,
There live no flames of vengeance or of ire,
And 'midst high hearts I leave thee, on a shore,
Where mercy's home hath been from days of yore.

Thus, to its earthly form, the spirit cried,
Then turn'd to follow its celestial guide,
But with a downcast mien, a pensive sigh,
A ling'ring step, and oft-reverted eye—

As when a child's reluctant feet obey
Its mother's voice, and slowly leave its play.

Night o'er the earth her dewy veil had cast,
When from th' eternal city's towers they pass'd,
And rising in their flight, on that proud dome,
Whose walls enshrine the guardian saint of Rome,
Lo! where a cherub-form sublimely tower'd,
But dreadful in his glory! sternly lower'd
Wrath in his kingly aspect: One he seem'd
Of the bright seven, whose dazzling splendour beam'd
On high amidst the burning lamps of heaven,
Seen in the dread, o'erwhelming visions given
To the wrapt seer of Patmos. Wheels of fire
Seem'd his fierce eyes, all kindling in their ire,
And his loose tresses, floating as he stood,
A comet's glare, presaging woe and blood.
He waved his sword; its red, terrific light,
With fearful radiance tinged the clouds of night,
While his left hand sustain'd a shield so vast,
Far o'er the Vatican beneath was cast
Its broad, protecting shadow. As the plume
Of the strong eagle spreads in sheltering gloom
O'er its young brood, as yet untaught to soar;
And while, all trembling at the whirlwind's roar,
Each humbler bird shrinks cowering in its nest,
Beneath that wing of power, and ample breast,
They sleep unheeding; while the storm on high
Breaks not their calm and proud security.

In the Second Canto, Basville enters Paris with his angelic guide, at the moment preceding the execution of Louis XVI.

The air was heavy, and the brooding skies
Look'd fraught with omens, as to harmonize
With his pale aspect. Through the forest round
Not a leaf whisper'd—and the only sound
That broke the stillness was a streamlet's moan
Murmuring amidst the rocks with plaintive tone,
As if a storm within the woodland bowers
Were gathering. On they moved—and lo! the towers
Of a far city! Nearer now they drew;
And all reveal'd, expanding on their view,
The Babylon, the scene of crimes and woes—
Paris, the guilty, the devoted, rose!

* * * * *

In the dark mantle of a cloud array'd,
Viewless and hush'd, the angel and the shade
Enter'd that evil city. Onward pass'd
The heavenly being first, with brow o'ercast
And troubled mien, while in his glorious eyes
Tears had obscured the splendour of the skies.
Pale with dismay, the trembling spirit saw
That alter'd aspect, and, in breathless awe,
Mark'd the strange silence round. The deep-toned swell
Of life's full tide was hush'd; the sacred bell,
The clamorous anvil, mute; all sounds were fled
Of labour or of mirth, and in their stead
Terror and stillness, boding signs of woe,
Enquiring glances, rumours whisper'd low,
Questions half-utter'd, jealous looks that keep
A fearful watch around, and sadness deep

That weighs upon the heart; and voices, heard
At intervals, in many a broken word —
Voices of mothers, trembling as they press'd
Th' unconscious infant closer to their breast;
Voices of wives, with fond imploring cries,
And the wild eloquence of tears and sighs,
On their own thresholds striving to detain
Their fierce impatient lords; but weak and vain
Affection's gentle bonds, in that dread hour
Of fate and fury—Love hath lost his power!
For evil spirits are abroad, the air
Breathes of their influence; Druid phantoms there,
Fired by that thirst for victims, which of old
Raged in their bosoms, fierce and uncontroll'd,
Rush, in ferocious transport, to survey
The deepest crime that e'er hath dimm'd the day.
Blood, human blood, hath stain'd their vests and hair,
On the winds tossing, with a sanguine glare,
Scattering red showers around them! flaming brands
And serpent scourges in their restless hands
Are wildly shaken; others lift on high
The steel, th' envenom'd bowl, and hurrying by
With touch of fire, contagious fury dart
Through human veins, fast kindling to the heart.
Then comes the rush of crowds! restrain'd no more,
Fast from each home the frenzied inmates pour:
From every heart affrighted mercy flies,
While her soft voice amidst the tumult dies.
Then the earth trembles, as from street to street
The tramp of steeds, the press of hastening feet,
The roll of wheels, all mingling in the breeze,
Come deepening onward, as the swell of seas

Heard at the dead of midnight; or the moan
Of distant tempests, or the hollow tone
Of the far thunder! Then what feelings press'd,
O wretched Basville! on thy guilty breast;
What pangs were thine, thus fated to behold
Death's awful banner to the winds unfold!
To see the axe, the scaffold, raised on high,
The dark impatience of the murderer's eye,
Eager for crime! And he, the great, the good,
Thy martyr-king, by men athirst for blood
Dragg'd to a felon's death! Yet still his mien,
'Midst that wild throng, is loftily serene;
And his step falters not. O, hearts unmoved!
Where have you borne your monarch?—He who
loved—
Loved you so well!—Behold! the sun grows pale,
Shrouding his glory in a tearful veil;
The misty air is silent, as in dread,
And the dim sky, with shadowy gloom o'erspread,
While saints and martyrs, spirits of the blest,
Look down, all weeping, from their bowers of rest.

* * * * * *

In that dread moment, to the fatal pile
The regal victim came; and raised the while
His patient glance, with such an aspect high,
So firm, so calm, in holy majesty,
That e'en th' assassins' hearts a moment shook
Before the grandeur of that kingly look;
And a strange thrill of pity, half-renew'd,
Ran through the bosoms of the multitude.

* * * * *

Like Him, who, breathing mercy till the last,
Pray'd till the bitterness of death was past:
E'en for his murderers pray'd, in that dark hour
When his soul yielded to affliction's power;
And the winds bore his dying cry abroad—
"Hast thou forsaken me, my God! my God?"
E'en thus the monarch stood; his prayer arose,
Thus calling down forgiveness on his foes—
"To thee my spirit I commend," he cried;
"And my lost people, Father! be their guide!"

* * * * * *

But the sharp steel descends—the blow is given,
And answer'd by a thunder-peal from heaven;
Earth, stain'd with blood, convulsive terrors owns,
And her kings tremble on their distant thrones!

THE ALCESTIS OF ALFIERI.

The *Alcestis* of Alfieri is said to have been the last tragedy he composed, and is distinguished to a remarkable degree by that tenderness of which his former works present so few examples. It would appear as if the pure and exalted affection by which the impetuosity of his fiery spirit was ameliorated during the latter years of his life, had impressed its whole character on this work, as a record of that domestic happiness in whose bosom his heart at length found a resting-place. Most of his earlier writings

bear witness to that "fever at the core," that burning impatience of restraint, and those incessant and untameable aspirations after a wider sphere of action, by which his youth was consumed; but the poetry of *Alcestis* must find its echo in every heart which has known the power of domestic ties, or felt the bitterness of their dissolution. The interest of the piece, however, though entirely domestic, is not for a moment allowed to languish, nor does the conjugal affection, which forms the main-spring of the action, ever degenerate into the pastoral insipidity of Metastasio. The character of Alcestis herself, with all its lofty fortitude, heroic affection, and subdued anguish, powerfully recalls to our imagination the calm and tempered majesty distinguishing the masterpieces of Greek sculpture, in which the expression of mental or bodily suffering is never allowed to transgress the limits of beauty and sublimity. The union of dignity and affliction impressing more than earthly grandeur on the countenance of Niobe, would be, perhaps, the best illustration of this analogy.

The following scene, in which Alcestis announces to Pheres, the father of Admetus, the terms upon which the oracle of Delphos has declared that his son may be restored, has seldom been surpassed by the author, even in his most celebrated productions. It is, however, to be feared that little of its beauty can be transferred into a translation, as the severity of a style so completely devoid of imagery, must render it dependent for many incommunicable attractions upon the melody of the original language.

ACT I.—Scene II.

Alcestis, Pheres.

Alc. Weep thou no more: O! monarch, dry thy tears,
For know, he shall not die; not now shall Fate
Bereave thee of thy son.
Phe. What mean thy words?
Hath then Apollo—is there then a hope?
Alc. Yes! hope for *thee*—hope, by the voice announced
From the prophetic cave. Nor would I yield
To other lips the tidings, meet alone
For thee to hear from mine.
Phe. But say! oh! say,
Shall then my son be spared?
Alc. He shall, to *thee*.
Thus hath Apollo said—Alcestis thus
Confirms the oracle—be thou secure.
Phe. O sounds of joy! He lives!
Alc. But not for this,
Think not that e'en for *this* the stranger Joy
Shall yet revisit these devoted walls.
Phe. Can there be grief when from his bed of death
Admetus rises? What deep mystery lurks
Within thy words? What mean'st thou? Gracious Heaven!
Thou, whose deep love is all his own, who hear'st
The tidings of his safety, and dost bear

Transport and life in that glad oracle
To his despairing sire; thy cheek is tinged
With death, and on thy pure ingenuous brow,
To the brief lightning of a sudden joy,
Shades dark as night succeed, and thou art wrapt
In troubled silence—speak! oh, speak!

Alc. The gods
Themselves have limitations to their power
Impassable, eternal—and their will
Resists not the tremendous laws of fate:
Nor small the boon they grant thee in the life
Of thy restored Admetus.

Phe. In thy looks
There is expression, more than in thy words,
Which thrills my shuddering heart. Declare, what terms
Can render fatal to thyself and us,
The rescued life of him thy soul adores?

Alc. O father! could my silence aught avail
To keep that fearful secret from thine ear,
Still should it rest unheard, till all fulfill'd
Were the dread sacrifice. But vain the wish;
And since too soon, too well it must be known,
Hear it from me.

Phe. Throughout my curdling veins
Runs a cold, death-like horror; and I feel
I am not all a father. In my heart
Strive many deep affections. Thee I love,
O fair and high-soul'd consort of my son!
More than a daughter; and thine infant race,
The cherish'd hope and glory of my age;
And, unimpair'd by time, within my breast,

High, holy, and unalterable love
For her, the partner of my cares and joys,
Dwells pure and perfect yet. Bethink thee, then,
In what suspense, what agony of fear,
I wait thy words; for well, too well, I see
Thy lips are fraught with fatal auguries,
To some one of my race.

Alc. Death hath his rights,
Of which not e'en the great Supernal Powers
May hope to rob him. By his ruthless hand,
Already seized, the noble victim lay,
The heir of empire, in his glowing prime
And noonday, struck:—Admetus, the revered,
The bless'd, the loved, by all who own'd his sway—
By his illustrious parents, by the realms
Surrounding his,—and oh! what need to add,
How much by his Alcestis?—Such was he,
Already in th' unsparing grasp of death
Withering, a certain prey. Apollo thence
Hath snatch'd him, and another in his stead,
Though not an equal—(who can equal him?)
Must fall a voluntary sacrifice.
Another, of his lineage or to him
By closest bonds united, must descend
To the dark realm of Orcus in *his* place,
Who thus alone is saved.

Phe. What do I hear?
Woe to us, woe!—what victim?—who shall be
Accepted in his stead?

Alc. The dread exchange
E'en now, O father! hath been made; the prey
Is ready, nor is wholly worthless him

For whom 'tis freely offer'd. Nor wilt thou,
O mighty goddess of th' infernal shades!
Whose image sanctifies this threshold floor,
Disdain the victim.

Phe. All prepared the prey!
And to our blood allied! O Heaven!—and yet
Thou bad'st me weep no more!

Alc. Yes! thus I said,
And thus again I say, thou shalt not weep
Thy son's, nor I deplore my husband's doom.
Let him be saved, and other sounds of woe
Less deep, less mournful far, shall here be heard
Than those *his* death had caused.—With some few tears,
But grief, and mingled with a gleam of joy,
E'en while the involuntary tribute lasts,
The victim shall be honour'd who resign'd
Life for Admetus.—Would'st thou know the prey,
The vow'd, the willing, the devoted one,
Offer'd and hallow'd to th' infernal gods,
Father!—'tis I.

Phe. What hast thou done? O Heaven!
What hast thou done?—And think'st thou he is saved
By such a compact?—Think'st thou he can live
Bereft of thee?—Of thee, his light of life,
His very soul!—Of thee, beloved far more
Than his loved parents—than his children more—
More than himself?—Oh! no, it shall not be!
Thou perish, O Alcestis! in the flower
Of thy young beauty!—perish, and destroy
Not him, not *him* alone, but us, but all,
Who as a child adore thee! Desolate

Would be the throne, the kingdom, reft of thee.
And think'st thou not of those whose tender years
Demand thy care?—thy children! think of them!
O thou, the source of each domestic joy,
Thou, in whose life alone Admetus lives,
His glory, his delight, thou shalt not die
While I can die for thee!—Me, me alone,
The oracle demands—a wither'd stem,
Whose task, whose duty, is for him to die.
My race is run—the fulness of my years,
The faded hopes of age, and all the love
Which hath its dwelling in a father's heart,
And the fond pity, half with wonder blent,
Inspired by thee, whose youth with heavenly gifts
So richly is endow'd;—all, all unite
To grave in adamant the just decree,
That I must die. But thou, I bid thee live!
Pheres commands thee, O Alcestis—live!
Ne'er, ne'er shall woman's youthful love surpass
An aged sire's devotedness.

Alc. I know
Thy lofty soul, thy fond paternal love;
Pheres, I know them well, and not in vain
Strove to anticipate their high resolves.
But if in silence I have heard thy words,
Now calmly list to mine, and thou shalt own
They may not be withstood.

Phe. What canst thou say
Which I should hear? I go, resolved to save
Him who with thee would perish;—to the shrine
E'en now I fly.

Alc. Stay, stay thee! 'tis too late.

Already hath consenting Proserpine,
From the remote abysses of her realms,
Heard and accepted the terrific vow
Which binds me, with indissoluble ties,
To death. And I am firm, and well I know
None can deprive me of the awful right
That vow hath won.

* * * * * *

Yes! thou may'st weep my fate:
Mourn for me, father! but thou canst not blame
My lofty purpose. Oh! the more endear'd
My life by every tie—the more I feel
Death's bitterness, the more my sacrifice
Is worthy of Admetus. I descend
To the dim shadowy regions of the dead
A guest more honour'd.

* * * * * *

In thy presence here
Again I utter the tremendous vow,
Now more than half fulfill'd. I feel, I know
Its dread effects. Through all my burning veins
Th' insatiate fever revels. Doubt is o'er.
The Monarch of the Dead hath heard—he calls,
He summons me away—and thou art saved,
O my Admetus!

In the opening of the third act, Alcestis enters, with her son Eumeles, and her daughter, to complete the sacrifice by dying at the feet of Proserpine's statue. The following scene ensues between her and Admetus.

Alc. Here, O my faithful handmaids! at the feet
Of Proserpine's dread image spread my couch,
For I myself e'en now must offer here
The victim she requires. And you, meanwhile,
My children! seek your sire. Behold him there,
Sad, silent, and alone. But through his veins
Health's genial current flows once more, as free
As in his brightest days: and he shall live—
Shall live for you. Go, hang upon his neck,
And with your innocent encircling arms
Twine round him fondly.

Eum. Can it be indeed,
Father, loved father! that we see thee thus
Restored? What joy is ours!

Adm. There is no joy!
Speak not of joy! away, away! my grief
Is wild and desperate; cling to me no more!
I know not of affection, and I feel
No more a father.

Eum. Oh! what words are these?
Are we no more thy children? Are we not
Thine own? Sweet sister! twine around his neck
More close; he must return the fond embrace.

Adm. O children! O my children! to my soul
Your innocent words and kisses are as darts
That pierce it to the quick. I can no more
Sustain the bitter conflict. Every sound
Of your soft accents but too well recalls
The voice which was the music of my life.
Alcestis! my Alcestis!—was she not
Of all her sex the flower? Was woman e'er
Adored like her before? Yet this is she,

The cold of heart, th' ungrateful, who hath left
Her husband and her infants! This is she,
O my deserted children! who at once
Bereaves you of your parents.

Alc. Woe is me!
I hear the bitter and reproachful cries
Of my despairing lord. With life's last powers,
O! let me strive to soothe him still. Approach,
My handmaids, raise me, and support my steps
To the distracted mourner. Bear me hence,
That he may hear and see me.

Adm. Is it thou?
And do I see thee still? and com'st thou thus
To comfort me, Alcestis? Must I hear
The dying accents *thus?* Alas! return
To thy sad couch, return! 'tis meet for me
There by thy side for ever to remain.

Alc. For me thy care is vain. Though meet for thee—

Adm. O voice! O looks of death! are these, are *these,*
Thus darkly shrouded with mortality,
The eyes that were the sunbeams and the life
Of my fond soul? Alas! how faint a ray
Falls from their faded orbs, so brilliant once,
Upon my drooping brow! How heavily
With what a weight of death thy languid voice
Sinks on my heart! too faithful far, too fond.
Alcestis! thou art dying—and for me!

* * * *

Alcestis! and thy feeble hand supports
With its last power, supports my sinking head,

E'en now, while death is on thee! Oh! the touch
Rekindles tenfold frenzy in my heart:
I rush, I fly impetuous to the shrine,
The image of yon ruthless Deity,
Impatient for her prey. Before thy death,
There, there, I too, self-sacrificed, will fall.

* * * *

Vain is each obstacle—In vain the gods
Themselves would check my fury—I am lord
Of my own days—and thus I swear—
Alc. Yes! swear
Admetus! for thy children to sustain
The load of life. All other impious vows,
Which thou, a rebel to the sovereign will
Of those who rule on high, might'st dare to form
Within thy breast; thy lip, by them enchain'd,
Would vainly seek to utter.—See'st thou not,
It is from them the inspiration flows,
Which in my language breathes? They lend me power,
They bid me through thy strengthen'd soul transfuse
High courage, noble constancy. Submit,
Bow down to them thy spirit. Be thou calm;
Be near me. Aid me. In the dread extreme
To which I now approach, from whom but thee
Should comfort be derived? Afflict me not,
In such an hour, with anguish worse than death,
O faithful and beloved, support me still!

* * * *

The choruses with which this tragedy is interspersed, are distinguished for their melody and clas-

sic beauty. The following translation will give our readers a faint idea of the one by which the third act is concluded.

Alc. My children! all is finish'd. Now, farewell!
To thy fond care, O Pheres! I commit
My widow'd lord: forsake him not.
Eum. Alas!
Sweet mother! wilt thou leave us? from thy side
Are we for ever parted?
Phe. Tears forbid
All utterance of our woes. Bereft of sense,
More lifeless than the dying victim, see
The desolate Admetus. Farther yet,
Still farther, let us bear him from the sight
Of his Alcestis.
Alc. O my handmaids! still
Lend me your pious aid, and thus compose
With sacred modesty these torpid limbs
When death's last pang is o'er.

Chorus.

Alas! how weak
Her struggling voice! that last keen pang is near.
Peace, mourners, peace!
Be hush'd, be silent, in this hour of dread!
Our cries would but increase
The sufferer's pangs; let tears unheard be shed.
Cease, voice of weeping, cease!
Sustain, O friend!
Upon thy faithful breast,
The head that sinks with mortal pain opprest!

And thou assistance lend
To close the languid eye,
Still beautiful in life's last agony.
Alas! how long a strife!
What anguish struggles in the parting breath
Ere yet immortal life
Be won by death!
Death! death! thy work complete!
Let thy sad hour be fleet,
Speed, in thy mercy, the releasing sigh!
No more keen pangs impart
To her, the high in heart,
Th' adored Alcestis, worthy ne'er to die.

Chorus of Admetus.

'Tis not enough, oh no!
To hide the scene of anguish from his eyes;
Still must our silent band
Around him watchful stand,
And on the mourner ceaseless care bestow,
That his ear catch not grief's funereal cries.
Yet, yet hope is not dead,
All is not lost below,
While yet the gods have pity on our woe.
Oft when all joy is fled,
Heaven lends support to those
Who on its care in pious hope repose.
Then to the blessed skies
Let our submissive prayers in chorus rise.
Pray! bow the knee, and pray!
What other task have mortals, born to tears,

Whom fate controls with adamantine sway?
O ruler of the spheres!
Jove! Jove! enthroned immortally on high,
Our supplication hear!
Nor plunge in bitterest woes
Him, who nor footstep moves nor lifts his eye
But as a child, which only knows
Its father to revere.

IL CONTE DI CARMAGNOLA;

A TRAGEDY.

BY ALESSANDRO MANZONI.

Francesco Bussone, the son of a peasant in Carmagnola, from whence his *nom de guerre* was derived, was born in the year 1390. Whilst yet a boy, and employed in the care of flocks and herds, the lofty character of his countenance was observed by a soldier of fortune, who invited the youth to forsake his rustic occupations, and accompany him to the busier scenes of the camp. His persuasions were successful, and Francesco entered with him into the service of Facino Cane, Lord of Alessandria. At the time when Facino died, leaving fourteen cities acquired by conquest to Beatrice di Tenda, his wife, Francesco di Carmagnola was amongst the most distinguished of his captains. Beatrice afterwards marrying Philip Visconti, Duke of Milan (who rewarded her by an igno-

minious death for the regal dowry she had conferred upon him), Carmagnola entered his army at the same time, and having, by his eminent services, firmly established the tottering power of that prince, received from him the title of Count, and was placed at the head of all his forces. The natural caprice and ingratitude of Philip's disposition, however, at length prevailed, and Carmagnola, disgusted with the evident proof of his wavering friendship and doubtful faith, left his service and his terrritories, and after a variety of adventures, took refuge in Venice. Thither the treachery of the Duke pursued him, and emissaries were employed to procure his assassination. The plot, however, proved abortive, and Carmagnola was elected captain-general of the Venetian armies, during the league formed by that republic against the Duke of Milan. The war was at first carried on with much spirit and success, and the battle of Maclodio, gained by Carmagnola, was one of the most important and decisive actions of those times. The night after the combat, the victorious soldiers gave liberty to almost all their prisoners. The Venetian envoys having made a complaint on this subject to the Count, he enquired what was become of the captives; and upon being informed that all, except four hundred, had been set free, he gave orders that the remaining ones also should be released immediately, according to the custom which prevailed amongst the armies of those days, the object of which was to prevent a speedy termination of the war. This proceeding of Carmagnola's occasioned much distrust and irritation in the minds of the Venetian rulers, and their displeasure was

increased when the armada of the republic, commanded by Il Trevisani, was defeated upon the Po, without any attempt in its favour having been made by the Count. The failure of their attempt upon Cremona was also imputed to him as a crime, and the Senate, resolving to free themselves from a powerful chief, now become an object of suspicion, after many deliberations on the best method of carrying their designs into effect, at length determined to invite him to Venice, under pretence of consulting him on their negotiations for peace. He obeyed their summons without hesitation or mistrust, and was every where received with extraordinary honours during the course of his journey. On his arrival at Venice, and before he entered his own house, eight gentlemen were sent to meet him, by whom he was escorted to St. Mark's Place. When he was introduced into the ducal palace, his attendants were dismissed, and informed that he would be in private with the Doge for a considerable time. He was arrested in the palace, then examined by the Secret Council, put to the torture, which a wound he had received in the service of the Republic rendered still more agonizing, and condemned to death. On the 5th May, 1432, he was conducted to execution, with his mouth gagged, and beheaded between the two columns of St. Mark's Place. With regard to the innocence or guilt of this distinguished character, there exists no authentic information. The author of the tragedy, which we are about to analyse, has chosen to represent him as entirely innocent, and probability at least is on this side. It is possible, that the haughtiness of an aspiring warrior, accustomed to

command, and impatient of controls, might have been the principal cause of offence to the Venetians; or perhaps their jealousy was excited by his increasing power over the minds of an obedient army; and, not considering it expedient to displace him, they resolved upon his destruction.

This tragedy, which is formed upon the model of the English and German drama, comprises the history of Carmagnola's life, from the day on which he was made commander of the Venetian armies to that of his execution, thus embracing a period of about seven years. The extracts we are about to present to our readers, will enable them to form their own opinion of a piece which has excited so much attention in Italy. The first act opens in Venice, in the hall of the Senate. The Doge proposes that the Count di Carmagnola should be consulted on the projected league between the Republic and the Florentines, against the Duke of Milan. To this all agree; and the Count is introduced. He begins by justifying his conduct from the imputations to which it might be liable, in consequence of his appearing as the enemy of the Prince whom he had so recently served:—

——— He cast me down
From the high place my blood had dearly won,
And when I sought his presence, to appeal
For justice there, 'twas vain! my foes had form'd
Around his throne a barrier; e'en my life
Became the mark of hatred, but in this
Their hopes have fail'd—I gave them not the time.
My life!—I stand prepared to yield it up

On the proud field, and in some noble cause
For glory well exchanged; but not a prey,
Not to be caught ignobly in the toils
Of those I scorn. I left him, and obtain'd
With you a place of refuge; yet e'en here
His snares were cast around me. Now all ties
Are broke between us; to an open foe,
An open foe I come. ——

He then gives counsel in favour of war, and retires, leaving the senate engaged in deliberation. War is resolved upon, and he is elected commander. The fourth scene represents the house of Carmagnola. His soliloquy is noble; but its character is much more that of English than of Italian poetry, and may be traced, without difficulty, to the celebrated monologue of Hamlet.

A leader—or a fugitive!—to drag
Slow years along in idle vacancy,
As a worn veteran living on the fame
Of former deeds: to offer humble prayers
And blessings for protection—owing all
Yet left me of existence to the might
Of other swords, dependent on some arm
Which soon may cast me off—or on the field
To breathe once more, to feel the tide of life
Rush proudly through my veins—to hail again
My lofty star, and at the trumpet's voice
To wake! to rule! to conquer!—Which must be
My fate, this hour decides. And yet, if peace
Should be the choice of Venice, shall I cling
Still poorly to ignoble safety here,

Secluded as a homicide, who cowers
Within a temple's precincts? Shall not he
Who made a kingdom's fate, control his own?
Is there not one among the many lords
Of this divided Italy—not one
With soul enough to envy that bright crown
Encircling Philip's head? And know they not
'Twas won by me from many a tyrant's grasp,
Snatch'd by my hand, and placed upon the brow
Of that ingrate, from whom my spirit burns
Again to wrest it, and bestow the prize
On him who best shall call the prowess forth
Which slumbers in my arm?

Marco, a senator, and a friend of the Count, now arrives, and announces to him that war is resolved upon, and that he is appointed to the command of the armies, at the same time advising him to act with caution towards his enemies in the Republic.

Car. Think'st thou I know not whom to deem
my foes?
Ay, I could number all.
Mar. And know'st thou, too,
What fault hath made them such?—'Tis, that thou
art
So high above them; 'tis, that thy disdain
Doth meet them undisguised. As yet not one
Hath done thee wrong; but who, when so resolved,
Finds not his time to injure?—In thy thoughts,
Save when they cross thy path, no place is theirs;
But they remember *thee*. The high in soul

Scorn and forget; but to the grovelling heart
There is delight in hatred. Rouse it not,
Subdue it, while the power is yet thine own.
I counsel no vile arts, from which my soul
Revolts indignantly — thou know'st it well;
But there is yet a wisdom, not unmeet
For the most lofty nature, — there is power
Of winning meaner minds, without descent
From the high spirit's glorious eminence, —
And would'st thou seek that magic, it were thine.

The first scene of the second act represents part of the Duke of Milan's camp near Maclodio. Malatesti, the commander-in-chief, and Pergola, a Condottiere of great distinction, are deliberating upon the state of the war. Pergola considers it imprudent to give battle, Malatesti is of a contrary opinion. They are joined by Sforza and Fortebraccio, who are impatient for action, and Torello, who endeavours to convince them of its inexpediency.

Sfo. Torello, didst thou mark the ardent soul
Which fires each soldier's eye?
Tor. I mark'd it well.
I heard th' impatient shout, th' exulting voice
Of Hope and Courage, and I turn'd aside,
That on my brow the warrior might not read
Th' involuntary thought, whose sudden gloom
Had cast deep shadows there. It was a thought,
That this vain semblance of delusive joy
Soon like a dream shall fade. It was a thought
On wasted valour doom'd to perish here

* * * * *

For these—what boots it to disguise the truth?—
These are no wars in which, for all things loved,
And precious, and revered—for all the ties
Clinging around the heart—for those whose smile
Makes home so lovely—for his native land,
And for its laws, the patriot soldier fights!
These are no wars in which the chieftain's aim
Is but to station his devoted bands,
And theirs, thus fix'd—to die! It is *our* fate
To lead a hireling train, whose spirits breathe
Fury, not fortitude. With burning hearts
They rush where Victory smiling waves them on;
But if delay'd, if between flight and death,
Pausing they stand—is there no cause to doubt
What choice were theirs? And but too well our hearts
That choice might here foresee. Oh! evil times,
When for the leader, care augments, the more
Bright glory fades away!—Yet, once again,
This is no field for us.

After various debates, Malatesti resolves to attack the enemy. The fourth and fifth scenes of the second act represent the tent of the Count in the Venetian camp, and his preparations for battle. And here a magnificent piece of lyric poetry is introduced, in which the battle is described, and its fatal effects lamented, with all the feeling of a patriot and a Christian. It appears to us, however, that this ode, hymn, or chorus as the author has entitled it, striking as its effect may be in a separate recitation, produces a much less powerful impression in the situation it occu-

pies at present. It is even necessary, in order to appreciate its singular beauty, that it should be re-perused, as a thing detached from the tragedy. The transition is too violent, in our opinion, from a tragic action, in which the characters are represented as clothed with existence, and passing before us with all their contending motives and feelings laid open to our inspection, to the comparative coldness of a lyric piece, where the author's imagination expatiates alone. The poet may have been led into this error by a definition of Schlegel's, who, speaking of the Greek choruses, gives it as his opinion, that "the chorus is to be considered as a personification of the moral thoughts inspired by the action—as the organ of the poet, who speaks in the name of the whole human race. The chorus, in short, is the *ideal* spectator."

But the fact was not exactly thus: The Greek chorus was composed of *real* characters, and expressed the sentiments of the people before whose eyes the action was imagined to be passing; thus the *true* spectator, after witnessing in representation the triumphs or misfortunes of kings and heroes, heard from the chorus the idea supposed to be entertained on the subject by the more enlightened part of the multitude. If the author, availing himself of his talent for lyric poetry, and varying the measure in conformity to the subject, had brought his chorus into action, introducing, for example, a veteran looking down upon the battle from an eminence, and describing its vicissitudes to the persons below, with whom he might interchange a variety of national and moral reflections, it appears to us that the dramatic effect would have

been considerably heightened, and the assertion that the Greek chorus is not compatible with the system of the modern drama, possibly disproved. We shall present our readers with the entire chorus of which we have spoken, as a piece to be read separately, and one to which the following title would be much more appropriate.

The Battle of Maclodio (or Macalo), an Ode.

Hark! from the right bursts forth a trumpet's sound,
A loud shrill trumpet from the left replies!
On every side hoarse echoes from the ground
To the quick tramp of steeds and warriors rise,
Hollow and deep—and banners, all around,
Meet hostile banners waving to the skies;
Here steel-clad bands in marshall'd order shine,
And there a host confronts their glittering line.

Lo! half the field already from the sight
Hath vanish'd, hid by closing groups of foes!
Swords crossing swords, flash lightning o'er the fight,
And the strife deepens, and the life-blood flows!
Oh! who are these? What stranger in his might
Comes bursting on the lovely land's repose?
What patriot hearts have nobly vow'd to save
Their native soil, or make its dust their grave?

One race, alas! these foes—one kindred race,
Were born and rear'd the same fair scenes among!
The stranger calls them brothers—and each face
That brotherhood reveals;—one common tongue

Dwells on their lips—the earth on which we trace
Their heart's blood—is the soil from whence they sprung.
One mother gave them birth—this chosen land,
Circled with Alps and seas, by Nature's guardian hand.

O grief and horror! who the first could dare
Against a brother's breast the sword to wield?
What cause unhallow'd and accursed, declare,
Hath bathed with carnage this ignoble field?
Think'st thou they know?—they but inflict and share
Misery and death, the motive unreveal'd!
—Sold to a leader, sold *himself* to die,
With him they strive,—they fall—and ask not why.

But are there none who love them? Have they none—
No wives, no mothers, who might rush between,
And win with tears the husband and the son
Back to his home, from this polluted scene?
And they, whose hearts, when life's bright day is done,
Unfold to thoughts more solemn and serene,
Thoughts of the tomb; why cannot *they* assuage
The storms of passion with the voice of age?

Ask not!—the peasant at his cabin-door
Sits calmly pointing to the distant cloud
Which skirts th' horizon, menacing to pour
Destruction down o'er fields he hath not plough'd.
Thus, where no echo of the battle's roar
Is heard afar, even thus the reckless crowd,
In tranquil safety number o'er the slain,
Or tell of cities burning on the plain.

There may'st thou mark the boy, with earnest gaze
Fix'd on his mother's lips, intent to know
By names of insult, those, whom future days
Shall see him meet in arms, their deadliest foe.
There proudly many a glittering dame displays
Bracelet and zone, with radiant gems that glow,
By lovers, husbands, home in triumph borne,
From the sad brides of fallen warriors torn.

Woe to the victors and the vanquish'd, woe!
The earth is heap'd, is loaded with the slain;
Loud and more loud the cries of fury grow,
A sea of blood is swelling o'er the plain.
But from th' embattled front, already, lo!
A band recedes—it flies—all hope is vain,
And venal hearts, despairing of the strife,
Wake to the love, the clinging love of life.

As the light grain disperses in the air,
Borne from the winnowing by the gales around,
Thus fly the vanquish'd, in their wild despair,
Chased, sever'd, scatter'd—o'er the ample ground.
But mightier bands, that lay in ambush there,
Burst on their flight—and hark! the deepening sound
Of fierce pursuit!—still nearer and more near,
The rush of war-steeds trampling in the rear.

The day is won!—they fall—disarm'd they yield,
Low at the conqueror's feet all suppliant lying!
'Midst shouts of victory pealing o'er the field,
Ah! who may hear the murmurs of the dying?

Haste! let the tale of triumph be reveal'd!
E'en now the courier to his steed is flying,
He spurs—he speeds—with tidings of the day,
To rouse up cities in his lightning way.

Why pour ye forth from your deserted homes,
O eager multitudes! around him pressing?
Each hurrying where his breathless courser foams,
Each tongue, each eye, infatuate hope confessing!
Know ye not *whence* th' ill-omen'd herald comes,
And dare ye dream he comes with words of blessing?—
Brothers, by brothers slain, lie low and cold,—
Be ye content! the glorious tale is told.

I hear the voice of joy, th' exulting cry!
They deck the shrine, they swell the choral strains,
E'en now the homicides assail the sky
With pæans, which indignant Heaven disdains!—
But from the soaring Alps the stranger's eye
Looks watchful down on our ensanguined plains,
And, with the cruel rapture of a foe,
Numbers the mighty, stretch'd in death below.

Haste! form your lines again, ye brave and true!
Haste, haste! your triumphs and your joy suspending:
Th' invader comes, your banners raise anew,
Rush to the strife, your country's call attending!
Victors! why pause ye?—Are ye weak and few?—
Ay! such he deem'd you, and for *this* descending,
He waits you on the field ye know too well,
The same red war-field where your brethren fell.

O thou devoted land! that canst not rear
In peace thine offspring; thou, the lost and won,
The fair and fatal soil, that dost appear
Too narrow still for each contending son;
Receive the stranger, in his fierce career
Parting thy spoils! Thy chastening is begun!
And, wresting from thy kings the guardian sword,
Foes whom thou ne'er hadst wrong'd sit proudly at
thy board.

Are these infatuate too?—Oh! who hath known
A people e'er by guilt's vain triumph blest?
The wrong'd, the vanquish'd, suffer not alone,
Brief is that joy that swells th' oppressor's breast.
What though not yet his day of pride be flown,
Though yet Heaven's vengeance spare his haughty
crest,
Well hath it mark'd him—and decreed the hour,
When his last sigh shall own the terror of its power.

Are we not creatures of one hand divine,
Form'd in one mould, to one redemption born?
Kindred alike where'er our skies may shine,
Where'er our sight first drank the vital morn?
Brothers! one bond around our souls should twine,
And woe to him by whom that bond is torn!
Who mounts by trampling broken hearts to earth,
Who bows down spirits of immortal birth!

The third act, which passes entirely in the tent of the Count, is composed of long discourses between Carmagnola and the Venetian envoys. One of these requires him to pursue the fugitives after his victory,

which he haughtily refuses to do, declaring that he will not leave the field until he has gained possession of the surrounding fortresses. Another complains that the Condottieri and the soldiers have released their prisoners, to which he replies, that it is an established military custom; and, sending for the remaining four hundred captives, he gives them their liberty also. This act, which terminates with the suspicious observations of the envoys on Carmagnola's conduct, is rather barren of interest, though the episode of the younger Pergola, which we shall lay before our readers, is happily imagined.

As the prisoners are departing, the Count observes the younger Pergola, and stops him.

Car. Thou art not, youth!
One to be number'd with the vulgar crowd.
Thy garb, and more, thy towering mien, would speak
Of nobler parentage. Yet with the rest
Thou minglest, and art silent!

Per. Silence best,
O chief! befits the vanquish'd.

Car. Bearing up
Against thy fate thus proudly, thou art proved
Worthy a better star. Thy name?

Per. 'Tis one
Whose heritage doth impose no common task
On him that bears it. One, which to adorn
With brighter blazonry were hard emprize.
My name is Pergola.

Car. And art thou then
That warrior's son?

Per. I am.

Car. Approach! embrace
Thy father's early friend! What thou art now
I was, when first we met. Oh! thou dost bring
Back on my heart remembrance of the days,
The young, and joyous, and adventurous days
Of hope and ardour. And despond not thou!
My dawn, 'tis true, with brighter omens smiled,
But still fair Fortune's glorious promises
Are for the brave, and though delay'd awhile,
She soon or late fulfils them. Youth! salute
Thy sire for me; and say, though not of *thee*
I ask'd it, yet my heart is well assured
He counsell'd not this battle.

Per. Oh! he gave
Far other counsels, but his fruitless words
Were spoken to the winds.

Car. Lament thou not.
Upon his chieftain's head the shame will rest
Of this defeat; and he who firmly stood
Fix'd at his post of peril, hath begun
A soldier's race full nobly. Follow me,
I will restore thy sword.

The fourth act is occupied by the machinations of the Count's enemies at Venice; and the jealous and complicated policy of that Republic, and the despotic authority of the Council of Ten, are skilfully developed in many of the scenes.

The first scene of the fifth act opens at Venice in the hall of the Council of Ten. Carmagnola is consulted by the Doge on the terms of peace offered by the Duke of Milan. His advice is received with

disdain, and after various insults he is accused of treason. His astonishment and indignation at this unexpected charge are expressed with all the warmth and simplicity of innocence.

Car. A traitor! I!—that name of infamy
Reaches not me. Let him the title bear
Who best deserves such meed—it is not mine.
Call me a dupe, and I may well submit,
For such my part is here; yet would I not
Exchange that name, for 'tis the worthiest still.
A traitor!—I retrace in thought the time,
When for your cause I fought; 'tis all one path
Strew'd o'er with flowers. Point out the day on which
A traitor's deeds were mine; the day which pass'd
Unmark'd by thanks, and praise, and promises
Of high reward! What more? Behold me here!
And when I came to seeming honour call'd,
When in my heart most deeply spoke the voice
Of love, and grateful zeal, and trusting faith—
Of trusting faith!—Oh, no! Doth he who comes
Th' invited guest of friendship, dream of faith?
I came to be ensnared! Well! it is done,
And be it so! but since deceitful hate
Hath thrown at length her smiling mask aside,
Praise be to Heaven! an open field at least
Is spread before us. Now 'tis yours to speak,
Mine to defend my cause; declare ye then
My treasons!

Doge. By the secret college soon
All shall be told thee.

Car. I appeal not there.

What I have done for you hath all been done
In the bright noonday, and its tale shall not
Be told in darkness. Of a warrior's deeds
Warriors alone should judge; and such I choose
To be mine arbiters; my proud defence
Shall not be made in secret. All shall hear.
Doge. The time for choice is past.
Car. What! Is there force
Employ'd against me?—Guards! (*raising his voice.*)
Doge. They are not nigh.
Soldiers! (*enter armed men.*)
Thy guards are these.
Car. I am betray'd!
Doge. 'Twas then a thought of wisdom to disperse
Thy followers. Well and justly was it deem'd
That the bold traitor, in his plots surprised,
Might prove a rebel too.
Car. E'en as ye list,
Now be it yours to charge me.
Doge. Bear him hence,
Before the secret college.
Car. Hear me yet
One moment first. That ye have doom'd my death
I well perceive; but with that death ye doom
Your own eternal shame. Far o'er these towers
Beyond its ancient bounds, majestic floats
The banner of the Lion, in its pride
Of conquering power, and well doth Europe know
I bore it thus to empire. *Here*, 'tis true,
No voice will speak men's thoughts; but far beyond
The limits of your sway, in other scenes,
Where that still, speechless terror hath not reach'd,

Which is your sceptre's attribute, my deeds,
And your reward, will live in chronicles
For ever to endure. Yet, yet, respect
Your annals, and the future! Ye will need
A warrior soon, and who will then be yours?
Forget not, though your captive now I stand,
I was not born your subject. No! my birth
Was 'midst a warlike people, one in soul,
And watchful o'er its rights, and used to deem
The honour of each citizen its own.
Think ye this outrage will be there unheard?
There is some treachery here. Our common foes
Have urged you on to this. Full well ye know
I have been faithful still. There yet is time.

Doge. The time is past. When thou didst meditate
Thy guilt, and in thy pride of heart defy
Those destined to chastise it, then the hour
Of foresight should have been.

Car. O mean in soul!
And dost thou dare to think a warrior's breast
For worthless life can tremble? Thou shalt soon
Learn how to die. Go! When the hour of fate
On thy vile couch o'ertakes thee, thou wilt meet
Its summons with far other mien than such
As I shall bear to ignominious death.

Scene II. — *The House of* Carmagnola.

Antonietta, Matilda.

Mat. The hours fly fast, the morn is risen, and yet
My father comes not!

Ant. Ah! thou hast not learn'd

By sad experience, with how slow a pace
Joys ever come; expected long, and oft
Deceiving expectation! while the steps
Of grief o'ertake us, ere we dream them nigh.
But night is past, the long and lingering hours
Of hope deferr'd are o'er, and those of bliss
Must soon succeed. A few short moments more,
And he is with us. E'en from this delay
I augur well. A council held so long
Must be to give us peace. He will be ours,
Perhaps for years our own.

Mat. O mother! thus
My hopes too whisper. Nights enough in tears,
And days in all the sickness of suspense
Our anxious love hath pass'd. It is full time
That each sad moment, at each rumour'd tale,
Each idle murmur of the people's voice,
We should not longer tremble, that no more
This thought should haunt our souls — E'en now, perchance,
He for whom thus our hearts are yearning — dies!

Ant. Oh! fearful thought! — but vain and distant now!
Each joy, my daughter, must be bought with grief.
Hast thou forgot the day, when proudly led
In triumph 'midst the noble and the brave,
Thy glorious father to the temple bore
The banners won in battle from his foes?

Mat. A day to be remember'd!

Ant. By his side
Each seem'd inferior. Every breath of air
Swell'd with his echoing name; and we, the while,

Stationed on high and sever'd from the throng,
Gazed on that one who drew the gaze of all,
While with the tide of rapture half o'erwhelm'd,
Our hearts beat high, and whisper'd—"We are his."

Mat. Moments of joy!

Ant. What have we done, my child,
To merit such? Heaven, for so high a fate,
Chose us from thousands, and upon thy brow
Inscribed a lofty name, a name so bright,
That he to whom thou bear'st the gift, whate'er
His race, may boast it proudly. What a mark
For envy is the glory of our lot!
And we should weigh its joys against these hours
Of fear and sorrow.

Mat. They are past e'en now.
Hark! 'twas the sound of oars!—it swells—'tis hush'd!
The gates unclose—O mother! I behold
A warrior clad in mail—he comes, 'tis he!

Ant. Whom should it be if not himself?—my husband! (*She comes forward.*)

(*Enter* Gonzaga *and others.*)

Ant. Gonzaga!—Where is he we look'd for? Where?
Thou answerest not!—O heaven! thy looks are fraught
With prophecies of woe!

Gon. Alas! too true
The omens they reveal!

Mat. Of woe to whom!

Gon. Oh! why hath such a task of bitterness
Fallen to my lot?
Ant. Thou would'st be pitiful,
And thou art cruel. Close this dread suspense;
Speak! I adjure thee, in the name of God!
Where is my husband?
Gon. Heaven sustain your souls
With fortitude to bear the tale!—my chief——
Mat. Is he return'd unto the field?
Gon. Alas!
Thither the warrior shall return no more.
The senate's wrath is on him. He is now
A prisoner!
Ant. He is a prisoner!—and for what?
Gon. He is accused of treason.
Mat. Treason! *He*
A traitor!—Oh! my father!
Ant. Haste! proceed,
And pause no more. Our hearts are nerved for all.
Say, what shall be his sentence?
Gon. From my lips
It shall not be reveal'd.
Ant. Oh! he is slain!
Gon. He lives, but yet his doom is fix'd.
Ant. He lives!
Weep not, my daughter! 'tis the time to act.
For pity's sake, Gonzaga, be thou not
Wearied of our afflictions. Heaven to thee
Intrusts the care of two forsaken ones.
He was thy friend—Ah! haste, then, be our guide;
Conduct us to his judges. Come, my child.
Poor innocent, come with me. There yet is left

Mercy upon the earth. Yes! they themselves
Are husbands, they are fathers! When they sign'd
The fearful sentence, they remember'd not
He was a father, and a husband too.
But when their eyes behold the agony
One word of theirs hath caused, their hearts will melt,
They will, they *must* revoke it. Oh! the sight
Of mortal woe is terrible to man!
Perhaps the warrior's lofty soul disdain'd
To vindicate his deeds, or to recall
His triumphs won for them. It is for us
To wake each high remembrance. Ah! we know
That he implored not, but *our* knees shall bend,
And we will pray.

Gon. Oh Heaven! that I could leave
Your hearts one ray of hope! There is no ear,
No place for prayers. The judges here are deaf,
Implacable, unknown. The thunderbolt
Falls heavy, and the hand by which 'tis lanch'd
Is veil'd in clouds. There is one comfort still,
The sole sad comfort of a parting hour,
I come to bear. Ye may behold him yet.
The moments fly. Arouse your strength of heart.
Oh! fearful is the trial, but the God
Of mourners will be with you.

Mat. Is there not
One hope?

Ant. Alas! my child!

Scene IV.—*A Prison.*

Carmagnola.

They must have heard it now.—Oh! that at least
I might have died far from them! Though their hearts
Had bled to hear the tidings, yet the hour,
The solemn hour of Nature's parting pangs,
Had then been past. It meets us darkly now,
And we must drain its draught of bitterness
Together, drop by drop. O ye wide fields;
Ye plains of fight, and thrilling sounds of arms!
O proud delights of danger! Battle cries,
And thou, my war-steed! and ye trumpet notes
Kindling the soul! 'Midst your tumultuous joys
Death seem'd all beautiful.—And must I then,
With shrinking cold reluctance, to my fate
Be dragg'd, e'en as a felon, on the winds
Pouring vain prayers and impotent complaints?
And Marco! hath he not betray'd me too?
Vile doubt! That I could cast it from my soul
Before I die!—But no! What boots it now
Thus to look back on life with eye that turns
To linger where my footstep may not tread?
Now, Philip! thou wilt triumph! Be it so!
I too have proved such vain and impious joys,
And know their value now. But oh! again
To see those loved ones, and to hear the last,
Last accents of their voices! By those arms
Once more to be encircled, and from thence
To tear myself for ever!—Hark! they come!—
O God of Mercy, from thy throne look down
In pity on their woes!

Scene V.

Antonietta, Matilda, Gonzaga, *and* Carmagnola.

Ant. My husband!
Mat. Oh! my father!
Ant. Is it thus
That thou returnest? and is this the hour
Desired so long?
Car. O ye afflicted ones!
Heaven knows I dread its pangs for you alone.
Long have my thoughts been used to look on Death,
And calmly wait his time. For you alone
My soul hath need of firmness; will ye, then,
Deprive me of its aid?—When the Most High
On virtue pours afflictions, he bestows
The courage to sustain them. Oh! let yours
Equal your sorrows! Let us yet find joy
In this embrace, 'tis still a gift of Heaven.
Thou weep'st, my child! and thou, beloved wife!
Ah! when I made thee mine, thy days flow'd on
In peace and gladness; I united thee
To my disastrous fate, and now the thought
Embitters death. Oh! that I had not seen
The woes I cause thee!
Ant. Husband of my youth!
Of my bright days, thou who didst make them bright,
Read thou my heart! the pangs of death are there,
And yet e'en now—I would not but be thine.
Car. Full well I know how much I lose in thee;
Oh! make me not too deeply feel it now.
Mat. The homicides!

Car. No, sweet Matilda, no!
Let no dark thought of rage or vengeance rise
To cloud thy gentle spirit, and disturb
These moments—they are sacred. Yes! my wrongs
Are deep, but thou, forgive them, and confess,
That, e'en 'midst all the fulness of our woe,
High, holy joy remains.—Death! death!—our foes,
Our most relentless foes, can only speed
Th' inevitable hour. Oh! man hath not
Invented death for man; it would be *then*
Madd'ning and insupportable; from Heaven
'Tis sent, and Heaven doth temper all its pangs
With such blest comfort, as no mortal power
Can give or take away. My wife! my child!
Hear my last words—they wring your bosoms now
With agony, but yet, some future day
'Twill soothe you to recall them. Live, my wife!
Sustain thy grief, and live! this ill-starr'd girl
Must not be reft of all. Fly swiftly hence,
Conduct her to thy kindred, she is theirs,
Of their own blood—and they so loved thee once!
Then, to their foe united, thou becamest
Less dear; for feuds and wrongs made warring sounds
Of Carmagnola's and Visconti's names.
But to their bosoms thou wilt now return
A mourner; and the object of their hate
Will be no more.—Oh! there is joy in death!—
And thou, my flower! that 'midst the din of arms,
Wert born to cheer my soul, thy lovely head
Droops to the earth! Alas! the tempest's rage
Is on thee now. Thou tremblest, and thy heart

Can scarce contain the heavings of its woe.
I feel thy burning tears upon my breast—
I feel, and cannot dry them. Dost thou claim
Pity from me, Matilda? Oh! thy sire
Hath now no power to aid thee, but thou know'st
That the forsaken have a father still
On high. Confide in him, and live to days
Of peace, if not of joy; for such to thee
He surely destines. Wherefore hath he pour'd
The torrent of affliction on thy youth,
If to thy future years be not reserved
All his benign compassion? Live! and soothe
Thy suffering mother. May she to the arms
Of no ignoble consort lead thee still!—
Gonzaga! take the hand which thou hast press'd
Oft in the morn of battle, when our hearts
Had cause to doubt if we should meet at eve.
Wilt thou yet press it, pledging me thy faith
To guide and guard these mourners, till they join
Their friends and kindred?

Gon. Rest assured, I will.

Car. I am content. And if, when this is done,
Thou to the field returnest, there for me
Salute my brethren; tell them that I died
Guiltless; thou hast been witness of my deeds,
Hast read my inmost thoughts—and know'st it well.
Tell them I never, with a traitor's shame,
Stain'd my bright sword.—Oh! never—I myself
Have been ensnared by treachery. Think of me
When trumpet-notes are stirring every heart,
And banners proudly waving in the air,
Think of thine ancient comrade! And the day

Following the combat, when upon the field,
Amidst the deep and solemn harmony
Of dirge and hymn, the priest of funeral rites,
With lifted hands, is offering for the slain
His sacrifice to heaven;—forget me not!
For I, too, hoped upon the battle plain
E'en so to die.

Ant. Have mercy on us, Heaven!

Car. My wife! Matilda! Now the hour is nigh,
And we must part.—Farewell!

Mat. No, father! no!

Car. Come to this breast yet, yet once more, and then
For pity's sake depart!

Ant. No! force alone
Shall tear us hence.

(*A sound of arms is heard.*)

Mat. Hark! what dread sound!

Ant. Great God!

(*The door is half opened, and armed men enter, the chief of whom advances to the Count. His wife and daughter fall senseless.*)

Car. O God! I thank thee. O most merciful!
Thus to withdraw their senses from the pangs
Of this dread moment's conflict!
Thou, my friend,
Assist them, bear them from this scene of woe,
And tell them, when their eyes again unclose
To meet the day—that nought is left to fear.

Notwithstanding the pathetic beauties of the last act, the attention which this tragedy has excited in Italy, must be principally attributed to the boldness of the author in so completely emancipating himself from the fetters of the dramatic unities. The severity with which the tragic poets of that country have, in general, restricted themselves to those rules, has been sufficiently remarkable, to obtain, at least, temporary distinction for the courage of the writer who should attempt to violate them. Although this piece comprises a period of several years, and that, too, in days so troubled and so "full of fate"—days in which the deepest passions and most powerful energies of the human mind were called into action by the strife of conflicting interests; there is, nevertheless, as great a deficiency of incident, as if "to be born and die" made all the history of aspiring natures contending for supremacy. The character of the hero is portrayed in words, not in actions; it does not unfold itself in any struggle of opposite feelings and passions, and the interest excited for him only commences at the moment when it ought to have reached its climax. The merits of the piece may be summed up in the occasional energy of the language and dignity of the thoughts; and the truth with which the spirit of the age is characterised, as well in the developement of that suspicious policy distinguishing the system of the Venetian government, as in the pictures of the fiery Condottieri, holding their councils of war,

"Jealous of honour, sudden and quick in quarrel."

CAIUS GRACCHUS,

A TRAGEDY.

By Monti.

This tragedy, though inferior in power and interest to the *Aristodemo* of the same author, is, nevertheless, distinguished by beauties of a high order, and such as, in our opinion, fully establish its claims to more general attention than it has hitherto received. Although the loftiness and severity of Roman manners, in the days of the Republic, have been sufficiently preserved to give an impressive character to the piece; yet those workings of passion and tenderness, without which dignity soon becomes monotonous, and heroism unnatural, have not been (as in the tragedies of Alfieri upon similar subjects) too rigidly suppressed.

The powerful character of the high-hearted Cornelia, with all the calm collected majesty which our ideas are wont to associate with the name of a Roman matron; and the depth and sublimity of maternal affection more particularly belonging to the mother of the Gracchi, are beautifully contrasted with the softer and more womanish feelings, the intense anxieties, the sensitive and passionate attachment, embodied in the person of Sicinia, the wife of Gracchus. The appeals made by Gracchus to the people are full of majestic eloquence, and the whole piece seems to

be animated by that restless and untameable spirit of freedom, whose immortalized struggles for ascendency give so vivid a colouring, so exalted an interest, to the annals of the ancient republics.

The tragedy opens with the soliloquy of Caius Gracchus, who is returned in secret to Rome, after having been employed in rebuilding Carthage, which Scipio had utterly demolished.

Caius, in Rome behold thyself! The night
Hath spread her favouring shadows o'er thy path·
And thou, be strong, my country! for thy son
Gracchus is with thee! All is hush'd around,
And in deep slumber; from the cares of day,
The worn plebeians rest. Oh! good and true,
And only Romans! your repose is sweet,
For toil hath given it zest; 'tis calm and pure,
For no remorse hath troubled it. Meanwhile,
My brother's murderers, the patricians, hold
Inebriate vigils o'er their festal boards,
Or in dark midnight councils sentence me
To death, and Rome to chains. They little deem
Of the unlook'd for and tremendous foe
So near at hand!—It is enough. I tread
In safety my paternal threshold.—Yes!
This is my own! Oh mother! oh my wife!
My child!—I come to dry your tears. I come
Strengthen'd by three dread furies. One is wrath,
Fired by my country's wrongs; and one deep love,
For those, my bosom's inmates; and the third—
Vengeance, fierce vengeance, for a brother's blood!

His soliloquy is interrupted by the entrance of Fulvius, his friend, with whose profligate character, and unprincipled designs, he is represented as unacquainted. From the opening speech made by Fulvius (before he is aware of the presence of Caius) to the slave by whom he is attended, it appears that he is just returned from the perpetration of some crime, the nature of which is not disclosed until the second act.

The suspicions of Caius are, however, awakened, by the obscure allusions to some act of signal, but secret vengeance, which Fulvius throws out in the course of the ensuing discussion.

Ful. This is no time for grief and feeble tears,
But for high deeds.
Caius. And we will make it such.
But prove we first our strength. Declare, what friends
(If yet misfortune hath her friends) remain
True to our cause?
Ful. Few, few, but valiant hearts!

* * * * * *

Oh! what a change is here! There was a time,
When, over all supreme, thy word gave law
To nations and their rulers; in thy presence
The senate trembled, and the citizens
Flock'd round thee in deep reverence. Then a word,
A look from Caius—a salute, a smile,
Fill'd them with pride. Each sought to be the friend,
The client, ay, the very slave, of him,
The people's idol; and beholding them

Thus prostrate in thy path, thou, thou thyself,
Didst blush to see their vileness!—But thy fortune
Is waning now, her glorious phantoms melt
Into dim vapour, and the earthly god,
So worshipp'd once, from his forsaken shrines,
Down to the dust is hurl'd.

Caius. And what of this?
There is no power in Fortune to deprive
Gracchus of Gracchus. Mine is such a heart
As meets the storm exultingly; a heart
Whose stern delight it is to strive with fate,
And conquer. Trust me, fate is terrible
But because man is vile. A coward first
Made her a deity.

* * * * * *

But say, what thoughts
Are foster'd by the people? Have they lost
The sense of their misfortunes? Is the name
Of Gracchus in their hearts—reveal the truth—
Already number'd with forgotten things?

Ful. A breeze, a passing breeze, now here, now there,
Borne on light pinion—such the people's love!
Yet have they claims on pardon, for their faults
Are of their miseries; and their feebleness
Is to their woes proportion'd. Haply still
The secret sigh of their full hearts is thine,
But their lips breathe it not. Their grief is mute;
And the deep paleness of their timid mien,
And eyes in fix'd despondence bent on earth,
And sometimes a faint murmur of thy name,
Alone accuse them. They are hush'd, for now

Not one, nor two, their tyrants; but a host
Whose numbers are the numbers of the rich,
And the patrician Romans. Yes! and well
May proud oppression dauntlessly go forth,
For Rome is widow'd! Distant wars engage
The noblest of her youth, by Fabius led,
And but the weak remain. Hence every heart
Sickens with voiceless terror; and the people,
Subdued and trembling, turn to thee in thought,
But yet are silent.

Caius. I will make them heard.
Rome is a slumbering lion, and my voice
Shall wake the mighty. Thou shalt see I came
Prepared for all; and as I track'd the deep
For Rome, my dangers to my spirit grew
Familiar in its musings. With a voice
Of wrath, the loud winds fiercely swell'd; the waves
Mutter'd around; Heaven flash'd in lightning forth,
And the pale steersman trembled: I the while
Stood on the tossing and bewilder'd bark,
Retired and shrouded in my mantle's folds,
With thoughtful eyes cast down, and all absorb'd
In a far deeper storm! Around my heart,
Gathering in secret, then my spirit's powers
Held council with themselves—and on my thoughts
My country rose,—and I foresaw the snares,
The treacheries of Opimius, and the senate,
And my false friends, awaiting my return.

* * * * *

Fulvius! I wept! but they were tears of rage!
For I was wrought to frenzy, by the thought

Of my wrong'd country, and of him, that brother,
Whose shade through ten long years hath sternly cried
"Vengeance!"—nor found it yet.

Ful. It is fulfill'd.

Caius. And how?

Ful. Thou shalt be told.

Caius. Explain thy words?

Ful. Then know—(incautious that I am!)

Caius. Why thus
Falters thy voice? Why speak'st thou not?

Ful. Forgive!
E'en friendship sometimes hath its secrets.

Caius. No!
True friendship, never!

Caius afterwards enquires what part his brother-in-law, Scipio Emilianus, is likely to adopt in their enterprises.

His high renown—
The glorious deeds, whereby was earn'd his name
Of second Africanus; and the blind,
Deep reverence paid him by the people's hearts,
Who, knowing him their foe, respect him still;
All this disturbs me: hardly will be won
Our day of victory, if by him withstood.

Ful. Yet won it *shall* be. If but this thou fear'st,
Then be at peace.

Caius. I understand thee not.

Ful. Thou wilt ere long. But here we vainly waste
Our time and words. Soon will the morning break,

Nor know thy friends as yet of thy return;
I fly to cheer them with the tidings.
Caius. Stay!
Ful. And wherefore?
Caius. To reveal thy meaning.
Ful. Peace!
I hear the sound of steps.

This conversation is interrupted by the entrance of Cornelia, with the wife and child of Caius. They are about to seek an asylum in the house of Emilianus, by whom Cornelia has been warned of the imminent danger which menaces the family of her son from the fury of the patricians, who intend, on the following day, to abrogate the laws enacted by the Gracchi in favour of the plebeians. The joy and emotion of Gracchus, on thus meeting with his family, may appear somewhat inconsistent with his having remained so long engaged in political discussion, on the threshold of their abode, without ever having made an enquiry after their welfare; but it would be somewhat unreasonable to try the conduct of a Roman (particularly in a tragedy) by the laws of *nature*. Before, however, we are disposed to condemn the principles which seem to be laid down for the delineation of Roman character in dramatic poetry, let us recollect that the general habits of the people whose institutions gave birth to the fearful grandeur displayed in the actions of the elder Brutus, and whose towering spirit was fostered to enthusiasm by the contemplation of it, must have been deeply tinctured by the austerity of even their virtues. Shakspeare alone, without compro-

mising the dignity of his Romans, has disencumbered them of the formal scholastic drapery which seems to be their *official* garb, and has stamped their features with the general attributes of human nature, without effacing the impress which distinguished "the men of iron," from the nations who "stood still before them."

The first act concludes with the parting of Caius and Fulvius in wrath and suspicion, Cornelia having accused the latter of an attempt to seduce her daughter, the wife of Scipio, and of concealing the most atrocious designs under the mask of zeal for the cause of liberty.

Of liberty
What speak'st thou, and to whom? Thou hast no shame—
No virtue—and thy boast is, to be free!
Oh! zeal for liberty! eternal mask
Assumed by every crime!

In the second act, the death of Emilianus is announced to Opimius the consul, in the presence of Gracchus, and the intelligence is accompanied by a rumour of his having perished by assassination. The mysterious expressions of Fulvius, and the accusation of Cornelia, immediately recur to the mind of Caius. The following scene, in which his vehement emotion and high sense of honour, are well contrasted with the cold-blooded sophistry of Fulvius, is powerfully wrought up.

Caius. Back on my thoughts the words of Fulvius rush,
Like darts of fire. All hell is in my heart!
(*Fulvius enters.*)
Thou com'st in time. Speak, thou perfidious friend!
Scipio lies murder'd on his bed of death!—
Who slew him?

Ful. Ask'st thou me?

Caius. Thee! thee, who late
Did'st in such words discourse of him, as now
Assure me thou'rt his murderer. Traitor, speak!

Ful. If thus his fate doth weigh upon thy heart,
Thou art no longer Gracchus, or thou ravest!
More grateful praise, and warmer thanks might well
Reward the gen'rous courage which hath freed
Rome from a tyrant, Gracchus from a foe!

Caius. Then he was slain by thee?

Ful. Ungrateful friend!
Why dost thou tempt me? Danger menaces
Thy honour. Freedom's wavering light is dim;
Rome wears the fetters of a guilty senate;
One Scipio drove thy brother to a death
Of infamy, another seeks *thy* fall;
And when one noble, one determined stroke,
To thee and thine assures the vict'ry, wreaks
The people's vengeance, gives thee life and fame,
And pacifies thy brother's angry shade,
Is it a cause for wailing? Am I call'd
For *this* a murderer? Go!—I say once more,
Thou art no longer Gracchus, or thou ravest!

Caius. I know thee now, barbarian! Would'st thou serve

My cause with crimes?

Ful. And those of that proud man
Whom I have slain, and thou dost mourn, are *they*
To be forgotten? Hath oblivion then
Shrouded the stern destroyer's ruthless work,
The famine of Numantia? Such a deed,
As on our name the world's deep curses drew!
Or the four hundred Lusian youths betray'd,
And with their bleeding, mutilated limbs,
Back to their parents sent? Is this forgot?
Go, ask of Carthage!—bid her wasted shores
Of him, this reveller in blood, recount
The terrible achievements!—At the cries,
The groans, th' unutterable pangs of those,
The more than hundred thousand wretches, doom'd
(Of every age and sex) to fire, and sword,
And fetters, I could marvel that the earth
In horror doth not open!—They were foes,
They were barbarians, but unarm'd, subdued,
Weeping, imploring mercy! And the law
Of Roman virtue is, to spare the weak,
To tame the lofty! But in other lands,
Why should I seek for records of his crimes,
If here the suffering people ask in vain
A little earth to lay their bones in peace?
If the decree which yielded to their claims
So brief a heritage, and the which to seal
Thy brother's blood was shed; if this remain
Still fruitless, still delusive, who was he
That mock'd its power?—Who to all Rome declared
Thy brother's death was just, was needful?—Who
But Scipio?—And remember thou the words

Which burst in thunder from thy lips e'en then,
Heard by the people! Caius, in my heart
They have been deeply treasured. He must die,
(Thus didst thou speak) this tyrant! We have need
That he should perish!—I have done the deed;
And call'st thou *me* his murderer? If the blow
Was guilt, then *thou* art guilty. From thy lips
The sentence came—the crime is thine alone.
I, thy devoted friend, did but obey
Thy mandate.

Caius. Thou my friend! I am not one,
To call a villain friend. Let thunders fraught
With fate and death, awake, to scatter those,
Who bringing liberty through paths of blood
Bring chains!—degrading Freedom's lofty self
Below e'en Slavery's level!—Say thou not,
Wretch! that the sentence and the guilt were mine!
I wish'd him slain!—'tis so—but by the axe
Of high and public justice; that whose stroke
On thy vile head will fall. Thou hast disgraced
Unutterably my name—I bid thee tremble!

Ful. Caius, let insult cease, I counsel thee,
Let insult cease! Be the deed just or guilty,
Enjoy its fruits in silence. Force me not
To utter more.

Caius. And what hast thou to say?

Ful. That which I now suppress.

Caius. How! are there yet,
Perchance, more crimes to be reveal'd?

Ful. I know not.

Caius. Thou know'st not!—Horror chills my curdling veins;
I dare not ask thee farther.
Ful. Thou dost well.
Caius. What said'st thou?
Ful. Nothing.
Caius. On my heart the words
Press heavily. Oh! what a fearful light
Bursts o'er my soul!—Hast thou accomplices?
Ful. Insensate! ask me not.
Caius. I must be told.
Ful. Away!—thou wilt repent.
Caius. No more of this, for I *will* know.
Ful. Thou wilt?
Ask then thy sister.
Caius (*alone.*) Ask my sister?—What!
Is she a murderess?—Hath my sister slain
Her lord?—Oh! crime of darkest dye!—Oh! name
Till now unstain'd, name of the Gracchi, thus
Consign'd to infamy!—to infamy?
The very hair doth rise upon my head,
Thrill'd by the thought!—Where shall I find a place
To hide my shame, to lave the branded stains
From this dishonour'd brow?—What should I do?
There is a voice whose deep tremendous tones
Murmur within my heart, and sternly cry,
"Away!—and pause not—slay thy guilty sister!"
Voice of lost honour of a noble line
Disgraced, I will obey thee!—terribly
Thou call'st for blood, and thou shalt be appeased.

PATRIOTIC EFFUSIONS

OF THE

ITALIAN POETS.

Whoever has attentively studied the works of the Italian poets, from the days of Dante and Petrarch to those of Foscolo and Pindemonte, must have been struck with those allusions to the glory and the fall, the renown and the degradation, of Italy, which give a melancholy interest to their pages. Amidst all the vicissitudes of that devoted country, the warning voice of her bards has still been heard to prophesy the impending storm, and to call up such deep and spirit-stirring recollections from the glorious past, as have resounded through the land, notwithstanding the loudest tumults of those discords which have made her—

> "Long, long, a bloody stage
> For petty kinglings tame,
> Their miserable game
> Of puny war to wage."

There is something very affecting in these vain, though exalted aspirations, after that independence which the Italians, as a nation, seem destined never to regain. The strains in which their high-toned feelings on this subject are recorded, produce on our

minds the same effect with the song of the imprisoned bird, whose melody is fraught, in our imagination, with recollections of the green woodland, the free air, and unbounded sky. We soon grow weary of the perpetual *violets and zephyrs*, whose cloying sweetness pervades the sonnets and canzoni of the minor Italian poets, till we are ready to "die in aromatic pain;" nor is our interest much more excited even by the everlasting *laurel* which inspires the enamoured Petrarch with so ingenious a variety of *concetti*, as might reasonably cause it to be doubted whether the beautiful Laura, or the emblematic tree, is the real object of the bard's affection; but the moment a patriotic chord is struck our feelings are awakened, and we find it easy to sympathize with the emotions of a modern Roman, surrounded by the ruins of the capitol; a Venetian when contemplating the proud trophies won by his ancestors at Byzantium; or a Florentine amongst the tombs of the mighty dead, in the church of Santa Croce. It is not, perhaps, *now*, the time to plead, with any effect, the cause of Italy; yet cannot we consider that nation as altogether degraded, whose literature, from the dawn of its majestic immortality, has been consecrated to the nurture of every generous principle and ennobling recollection; and whose "choice and master spirits," under the most adverse circumstances, have kept alive a flame, which may well be considered as imperishable, since the "ten thousand tyrants" of the land have failed to quench its brightness. We present our readers with a few of the minor effusions, in which the indignant though unavailing regrets of those, who,

to use the words of Alfieri, are "slaves, yet still *indignant* slaves,"[1] have been feelingly portrayed.

The first of these productions must, in the original, be familiar to every reader who has any acquaintance with Italian literature.

VINCENZO DA FILICAJA.

"Quando giù dai gran monti bruna bruna," &c.

When from the mountain's brow, the gathering shades
Of twilight fall, on one deep thought I dwell:
Day beams o'er other lands, if here she fades,
Nor bids the universe at once farewell.

But thou, I cry, my country! what a night
Spreads o'er thy glories one dark sweeping pall;
Thy thousand triumphs won by valour's might,
And wisdom's voice—what now remains of all?

And see'st thou not th' ascending flame of war,
Burst through thy darkness, redd'ning from afar?
Is not thy misery's evidence complete?
But if endurance can thy fall delay,
Still, still endure, devoted one! and say,
If it be victory thus but to retard defeat!

[1] "Schiavi siam, ma schiavi ognor frementi."—Alfieri.

CARLO MARIA MAGGI.

"Io grido, e griderò finche mi senta," &c.

I CRY aloud, and ye shall hear my call,
Arno, Sessino, Tiber; Adrian deep,
And blue Tyrrhene! Let him first roused from sleep
Startle the next! one peril broods o'er all.
It nought avails that Italy should plead,
Forgetting valour, sinking in despair,

At strangers' feet!—our land is all too fair;
Nor tears, nor prayers, can check ambition's speed
In vain her faded cheek, her humbled eye,
For pardon sue; 'tis not her agony,
Her death alone may now appease her foes.
Be theirs to suffer who to combat shun!
But oh! weak pride, thus feeble and undone,
Nor to wage battle, nor endure repose!

ALESSANDRO MARCHETTI.

"Italia! Italia! ah! non più Italia! appena," &c.

ITALIA! oh! no more Italia now!
Scarce of her form a vestige dost thou wear;
She was a queen with glory mantled;—Thou,
A slave, degraded, and compell'd to bear.

Chains gird thy hands and feet; deep clouds of care
Darken thy brow, once radiant as thy skies;
And shadows, born of terror and despair—
Shadows of death have dimm'd thy glorious eyes.

Italia! oh! Italia, now no more!
For thee my tears of shame and anguish flow;
And the glad strains my lyre was wont to pour,
Are changed to dirge-notes: but my deepest woe
Is, that base herds of thine own sons, the while,
Behold thy miseries with insulting smile.

ALESSANDRO PEGOLOTTI.

"Quella, ch'ambi le mani entro la chioma," &c.

She that cast down the empires of the world,
And, in her proud triumphal course through Rome,
Dragg'd them, from freedom and dominion hurl'd,
Bound by the hair, pale, humbled, and o'ercome.

I see her now, dismantled of her state,
Spoil'd of her sceptre; crouching to the ground
Beneath a hostile car, and lo! the weight
Of fetters, her imperial neck around!

Oh! that a stranger's envious hands had wrought
This desolation! for I then would say,
"Vengeance, Italia!"—in the burning thought
Losing my grief: but 'tis th' ignoble sway
Of vice hath bow'd thee! Discord, slothful ease,
Theirs is that victor car; thy tyrant lords are these.

FRANCESCO MARIA DE CONTI.

THE SHORE OF AFRICA.

"O peregrin, chi muovi erranti il passo," &c.

Pilgrim! whose steps those desert sands explore,
Where verdure never spreads its bright array;
Know, 'twas on this inhospitable shore,
From Pompey's heart the life-blood ebb'd away.
'Twas here betray'd he fell, neglected lay;
Nor found *his* relics a sepulchral stone,
Whose life, so long a bright, triumphal day,
O'er Tiber's wave supreme in glory shone!

Thou, stranger! if from barbarous climes thy birth,
Look round exultingly, and bless the earth,
Where Rome, with him, saw power and virtue die;
But if 'tis Roman blood that fills thy veins,
Then, son of heroes! think upon thy chains,
And bathe with tears the grave of liberty.

THE SCEPTIC,

A POEM.

"Leur raison, qu'ils prennent pour guide, ne presente a leur esprit que des conjectures et des embarras; les absurdites ou ils tombent en niant la Religion deviennent plus insoutenables que les verites dont la hauteur les etonne; et pour ne vouloir pas croire des mysteres incomprehensibles, ils suivent l'une apres l'autre d'incomprehensibles erreurs."—BOSSUET, *Oraisons Funebres.*

THE SCEPTIC.

When the young Eagle, with exulting eye,
Has learned to dare the splendour of the sky,
And leave the Alps beneath him in his course,
To bathe his crest in morn's empyreal source,
Will his free wing, from that majestic height,
Descend to follow some wild meteor's light,
Which far below, with evanescent fire,
Shines to delude, and dazzles to expire?

No! still through clouds he wins his upward way
And proudly claims his heritage of day!
—And shall the spirit on whose ardent gaze
The day-spring from on high hath pour'd its blaze,
Turn from that pure effulgence to the beam
Of earth-born light that sheds a treacherous gleam,
Luring the wanderer from a star of faith,
To the deep valley of the shades of death?
What bright exchange, what treasure shall be given,
For the high birth-right of its hope in Heaven?
If lost the gem which empires could not buy,
What yet remains?—a dark eternity!

Is earth still Eden!—might a seraph guest,
Still, 'midst its chosen bowers, delighted rest!
Is all so cloudless and so calm below,
We seek no fairer scenes than *life* can show?

That the cold Sceptic, in his pride elate,
Rejects the promise of a brighter state,
And leaves the rock, no tempest shall displace,
To rear his dwelling on the quicksand's base?

Votary of doubt! then join the festal throng,
Bask in the sunbeam, listen to the song,
Spread the rich board, and fill the wine-cup high,
And bind the wreath ere yet the roses die!
'Tis well, thine eye is yet undimm'd by time,
And thy heart bounds, exulting in its prime;
Smile then unmoved at Wisdom's warning voice,
And, in the glory of thy strength, rejoice!

But life has sterner tasks; e'en youth's brief hours
Survive the beauty of their loveliest flowers;
The founts of joy, where pilgrims rest from toil,
Are few and distant on the desert soil;
The soul's pure flame the breath of storms must fan,
And pain and sorrow claim their nursling—Man!
Earth's noblest sons the bitter cup have shared—
Proud child of reason, how art *thou* prepared?
When years, with silent might, thy frame have bow'd,
And o'er thy spirit cast their wintry cloud,
Will Memory soothe thee on thy bed of pain,
With the bright images of pleasure's train?
Yes! as the sight of some far distant shore,
Whose well-known scenes his foot shall tread no more,
Would cheer the seaman, by the eddying wave
Drawn, vainly struggling, to th' unfathom'd grave!
Shall Hope, the faithful cherub, hear thy call,
She who, like heaven's own sunbeam, smiles for all?

Will *she* speak comfort?—Thou hast shorn her plume,
That might have raised thee far above the tomb,
And hush'd the only voice whose angel tone
Soothes when all melodies of joy are flown!

For she was born beyond the stars to soar,
And kindling at the source of life, above;
Thou couldst not, mortal! rivet to the earth
Her eye, whose beam is of celestial birth;
She dwells with those who leave her pinion free,
And sheds the dews of heav'n on all but thee.

Yet few there are, so lonely, so bereft,
But some true heart, that beats to theirs is left,
And, haply, one whose strong affection's power
Unchanged may triumph through misfortune's hour,
Still with fond care supports thy languid head,
And keeps unwearied vigils by thy bed.

But thou! whose thoughts have no blest home above,
Captive of earth! and canst thou dare to *love?*
To nurse such feelings as delight to rest,
Within that hallow'd shrine—a parent's breast,
To fix each hope, concentrate every tie,
On one frail idol,—destined but to die,
Yet mock the faith that points to worlds of light,
Where sever'd souls, made perfect, reunite?
Then tremble! cling to every passing joy,
Twined with the life a moment may destroy!
If there be sorrow in a parting tear,
Still let "*for ever*" vibrate on thine ear!

If some bright hour on rapture's wing hath flown,
Find more than anguish in the thought—'tis gone!
Go! to a voice such magic influence give,
Thou canst not lose its melody, and live;
And make an eye the lode-star of thy soul,
And let a glance the springs of thought control;
Gaze on a mortal form with fond delight,
Till the fair vision mingles with thy sight;
There seek thy blessings, there repose thy trust,
Lean on the willow, idolize the dust!
Then, when thy treasure best repays thy care,
Think on that dread "*for ever*"—and despair!

And oh! no strange, unwonted storm there needs,
To wreck at once thy fragile ark of reeds.
Watch well its course—explore with anxious eye
Each little cloud that floats along the sky—
Is the blue canopy serenely fair?
Yet may the thunderbolt unseen be there,
And the bark sink, when peace and sunshine sleep
On the smooth bosom of the waveless deep!
Yes! ere a sound, a sign, announce thy fate,
May the blow fall which makes thee desolate!
Not always Heaven's destroying angel shrouds
His awful form in tempests and in clouds;
He fills the summer-air with latent power,
He hides his venom in the scented flower,
He steals upon thee, in the Zephyr's breath,
And festal garlands veil the shafts of death!

Where art thou *then*, who thus didst rashly cast
Thine all upon the mercy of the blast,

And vainly hope the tree of life to find
Rooted in sands that flit before the wind?
Is not that earth thy spirit loved so well,
It wish'd not in a brighter sphere to dwell,
Become a desert *now*, a veil of gloom,
O'ershadow'd with the midnight of the tomb?
Where shalt thou turn?—it is not thine to raise
To yon pure heaven thy calm confiding gaze.
No gleam reflected from that realm of rest
Steals on the darkness of thy troubled breast,
Not for thine eye shall faith divinely shed
Her glory round the image of the dead;
And if, when slumber's lonely couch is prest,
The form departed be thy spirit's guest,
It bears no light from purer worlds to this;
The future lends not e'en a dream of bliss.

But who shall dare the Gate of Life to close,
Or say, *thus far* the stream of mercy flows?
That fount unseal'd, whose boundless waves embrace
Each distant isle, and visit every race,
Pours from the Throne of God its current free,
Nor yet denies th' immortal draught to thee.
Oh! while the doom impends, nor yet decreed,
While yet th' Atoner hath not ceased to plead,
While still, suspended by a single hair,
The sharp bright sword hangs quivering in the air,
Bow down thy heart to Him, who will not break
The bruised reed; e'en yet, awake, awake!
Patient, because Eternal, (1) He may hear
Thy prayer of agony with pitying ear,
And send his chastening spirit from above,
O'er the deep chaos of thy soul to move.

But seek thou mercy through his name alone,
To whose unequall'd sorrows none was shown.
Through Him, who here in mortal garb abode,
As man to suffer, and to heal as God!
And, born the sons of utmost time to bless,
Endured all scorn, and aided all distress.

Call thou on Him—for He, in human form,
Hath walk'd the waves of Life, and still'd the storm;
He, when her hour of lingering grace was past,
O'er Salem wept, relenting to the last.
Wept with such tears as Judah's monarch pour'd
O'er his lost child, ungrateful, yet deplored;
And, offering guiltless blood that guilt might live,
Taught from his Cross the lesson—to forgive!

Call thou on Him—his prayer e'en then arose,
Breathed in unpitied anguish, for his foes.
And haste!—ere bursts the lightning from on high,
Fly to the City of thy refuge, fly! (2)
So shall the avenger turn his steps away,
And sheathe his falchion, baffled of its prey.

Yet must long days roll on, ere peace shall brood,
As the soft Halcyon, o'er thy heart subdued;
Ere yet the dove of Heaven descend, to shed
Inspiring influence o'er thy fallen head.
—He who hath pined in dungeons, 'midst the shade
Of such deep night as man for man hath made,
Through lingering years; if call'd at length to be
Once more, by nature's boundless charter, free,
Shrinks feebly back, the blaze of noon to shun,
Fainting at day, and blasted by the sun!

Thus, when the captive soul hath long remain'd
In its own dread abyss of darkness chain'd,
If the Deliverer, in his might at last,
Its fetters, born of earth, to earth should cast,
The beam of truth o'erpowers its dazzled sight,
Trembling it sinks, and finds no joy in light.
But this will pass away—that spark of mind,
Within thy frame unquenchably enshrined,
Shall live to triumph in its brightening ray,
Born to be foster'd with ethereal day.
Then wilt thou bless the hour, when o'er thee pass'd,
On wing of flame, the purifying blast,
And sorrow's voice, through paths before untrod,
Like Sinai's trumpet, call'd thee to thy God!

But hopest thou, in thy panoply of pride,
Heaven's messenger, affliction, to deride?
In thine own strength unaided to defy,
With Stoic smile, the arrows of the sky?
Torn by the vulture, fetter'd to the rock,
Still, Demigod! the tempest wilt thou mock?
Alas! the tower that crests the mountain's brow
A thousand years may awe the vale below,
Yet not the less be shatter'd on its height,
By one dread moment of the earthquake's might!
A thousand pangs thy bosom may have borne,
In silent fortitude, or haughty scorn,
Till comes the one, the master-anguish, sent
To break the mighty heart that ne'er was bent.

Oh! what is nature's strength? the vacant eye,
By mind deserted, hath a dread reply!

The wild delirious laughter of despair,
The mirth of frenzy—seek an answer there!
Turn not away, though pity's cheek grow pale,
Close not thine ear against their awful tale.
They tell thee, reason, wandering from the ray
Of Faith, the blazing pillar of her way,
In the mid-darkness of the stormy wave,
Forsook the struggling soul she could not save!
Weep not, sad moralist! o'er desert plains,
Strew'd with the wrecks of grandeur—mouldering fanes,
Arches of triumph, long with weeds o'ergrown,
And regal cities, now the serpent's own;
Earth has more awful ruins—one lost mind,
Whose star is quench'd, hath lessons for mankind,
Of deeper import than each prostrate dome,
Mingling its marble with the dust of Rome.

But who with eye unshrinking shall explore
That waste, illumed by reason's beam no more?
Who pierce the deep, mysterious clouds that roll
Around the shatter'd temple of the soul,
Curtain'd with midnight?—low its columns lie,
And dark the chambers of its imag'ry, (3)
Sunk are its idols now—and God alone
May rear the fabric by their fall o'erthrown!
Yet from its inmost shrine, by storms laid bare,
Is heard an oracle that cries—"Beware!
Child of the dust! but ransom'd of the skies!
One breath of Heaven—and thus thy glory dies!
Haste, ere the hour of doom, draw nigh, to Him
Who dwells above between the cherubim!"

Spirit dethroned! and check'd in mid career,
Son of the morning! exiled from thy sphere,
Tell us thy tale!—Perchance thy race was run
With science, in the chariot of the sun;
Free as the winds the paths of space to sweep,
Traverse the untrodden kingdoms of the deep,
And search the laws that Nature's springs control,
There tracing all—save Him who guides the whole.

Haply thine eye its ardent glance had cast
Through the dim shades, the portals of the past;
By the bright lamp of thought thy care had fed
From the far beacon-lights of ages fled,
The depth of time exploring to retrace
The glorious march of many a vanish'd race.

Or did thy power pervade the living lyre,
Till its deep chords became instinct with fire,
Silenced all meaner notes, and swell'd on high,
Full and alone, their mighty harmony,
While woke each passion from its cell profound,
And nations started at th' electric sound?

Lord of th' Ascendant! what avails it now,
Though bright the laurels waved upon thy brow?
What, though thy name, through distant empires heard,
Bade the heart bound as doth a battle-word?
Was it for *this* thy still unwearied eye
Kept vigil with the watch-fires of the sky,
To make the secrets of all ages thine,
And commune with majestic thoughts that shine
O'er Time's long shadowy pathway?—hath thy mind
Sever'd its lone dominions from mankind,

For *this* to woo their homage?—Thou hast sought
All, save the wisdom with salvation fraught,
Won every wreath—but that which will not die,
Nor aught neglected—save eternity!

And did all fail thee, in the hour of wrath,
When burst th' o'erwhelming vials on thy path?
Could not the voice of Fame inspire thee then,
O spirit! scepter'd by the sons of men,
With an Immortal's courage to sustain
The transient agonies of earthly pain?

—One, one there was, all-powerful to have saved
When the loud fury of the billow raved;
But him thou knew'st not—and the light he lent
Hath vanish'd from its ruin'd tenement,
But left thee breathing, moving, lingering yet,
A thing we shrink from—vainly to forget!
Lift the dread veil no further—hide, oh! hide
The bleeding form, the couch of suicide!
The dagger grasp'd in death—the brow, the eye,
Lifeless, yet stamp'd with rage and agony;
The soul's dark traces left in many a line
Graved on *his* mien, who died,—"and made no sign!"
Approach not, gaze not—lest thy fever'd brain
Too deep that image of despair retain;
Angels of slumber! o'er the midnight hour,
Let not such visions claim unhallow'd power,
Lest the mind sink with terror, and above
See but th' Avenger's arm, forget th' Atoner's love!

O Thou! th' unseen, th' all-seeing!—Thou whose ways
Mantled with darkness, mock all finite gaze,

Before whose eyes the creatures of Thy hand,
Seraph and man, alike in weakness stand,
And countless ages, trampling into clay
Earth's empires on their march, are but a day;
Father of worlds unknown, unnumber'd—Thou,
With whom all time is one eternal *now*,
Who know'st no past, nor future—Thou whose breath
Goes forth, and bears to myriads, life or death!
Look on us, guide us!—wanderers of a sea
Wild and obscure, what are we, reft of Thee!
A thousand rocks, deep-hid, elude our sight,
A star may set—and we are lost in night;
A breeze may waft us to the whirlpool's brink,
A treach'rous song allure us—and we sink!

Oh! by *His* love, who, veiling Godhead's light,
To moments circumscribed the Infinite,
And Heaven and Earth disdain'd not to ally
By that dread union—Man with Deity;
Immortal tears o'er mortal woes who shed,
And, ere he raised them, wept above the dead;
Save, or we perish!—let Thy word control
The earthquakes of that universe—the soul;
Pervade the depths of passion—speak once more
The mighty mandate, guard of every shore,
"Here shall thy waves be stay'd"—in grief, in pain
The fearful poise of reason's sphere maintain,
Thou, by whom suns are balanced!—thus secure
In Thee shall Faith and Fortitude endure;
Conscious of Thee, unfaltering shall the just
Look upward still, in high and holy trust,
And, by affliction guided to Thy shrine,
The first, last thought of suffering hearts be Thine

And oh! be near, when clothed with conquering power,
The King of Terrors claims his own dread hour:
When on the edge of that unknown abyss,
Which darkly parts us from the realm of bliss,
Awe-struck alike the timid and the brave,
Alike subdued the monarch and the slave,
Must drink the cup of trembling (4)—when we see
Naught in the universe but Death and Thee,
Forsake us not;—if still, when life was young,
Faith to Thy bosom, as her home, hath sprung,
If Hope's retreat hath been, through all the past,
The shadow by the Rock of Ages cast,
Father, forsake us not!—when tortures urge
The shrinking soul to that mysterious verge,
When from Thy justice to Thy love we fly,
On Nature's conflict look with pitying eye,
Bid the strong wind, the fire, the earthquake cease,
Come in the still small voice, and whisper—peace! (5)

For oh! 'tis awful—He that hath beheld
The parting spirit, by its fears repell'd,
Cling in weak terror to its earthly chain,
And from the dizzy brink recoil, in vain;
He that hath seen the last convulsive throe
Dissolve the union form'd and closed in woe,
Well knows that hour is awful.—In the pride
Of youth and health, by sufferings yet untried,
We talk of Death, as something, which 'twere sweet
In Glory's arms exultingly to meet,
A closing triumph, a majestic scene,
Where gazing nations watch the hero's mien,

As, undismay'd amidst the tears of all,
He folds his mantle, regally to fall!

Hush, fond enthusiast!—still, obscure and lone,
Yet not less terrible because unknown,
Is the last hour of thousands—they retire
From life's throng'd path, unnoticed to expire;
As the light leaf, whose fall to ruin bears
Some trembling insect's little world of cares,
Descends in silence—while around waves on
The mighty forest, reckless what is gone!
Such is man's doom—and, ere an hour be flown,
—Start not, thou trifler!—such may be thine own.

But, as life's current in its ebb draws near
The shadowy gulf, there wakes a thought of fear,
A thrilling thought, which haply mock'd before,
We fain would stifle—but it sleeps no more!
There are who fly its murmurs 'midst the throng,
That join the masque of revelry and song;
Yet still Death's image, by its power restored,
Frowns 'midst the roses of the festal board,
And when deep shades o'er earth and ocean brood,
And the heart owns the might of solitude,
Is its low whisper heard?—a note profound,
But wild and startling as the trumpet sound,
That bursts, with sudden blast, the dead repose
Of some proud city, storm'd by midnight foes!

Oh! vainly Reason's scornful voice would prove
That life hath nought to claim such lingering love,
And ask if e'er the captive, half unchain'd,
Clung to the links which yet his step restrain'd?

In vain Philosophy, with tranquil pride,
Would mock the feelings she perchance can hide,
Call up the countless armies of the dead,
Point to the pathway beaten by their tread,
And say — "What wouldst thou? Shall the fix'd
decree,
Made for creation, be reversed for *thee?*"
— Poor, feeble aid! — proud Stoic! ask not why,
It is enough, that nature shrinks to die!
Enough, *that* horror, which thy words upbraid,
Is her dread penalty, and must be paid!
— Search thy deep wisdom, solve the scarce defined
And mystic questions of the parting mind,
Half check'd, half utter'd—tell her, what shall burst,
In whelming grandeur, on her vision first,
When freed from mortal films! — what viewless world
Shall first receive her wing, but half unfurl'd?
What awful and unbodied beings guide
Her timid flight through regions yet untried?
Say, if at once, her final doom to hear,
Before her God the trembler must appear,
Or wait that day of terror, when the sea
Shall yield its hidden dead, and heaven and earth
shall flee?

Hast thou no answer? — then deride no more
The thoughts that shrink, yet cease not to explore
Th' unknown, th' unseen, the future — though the
heart,
As at unearthly sounds, before them start;
Though the frame shudder, and the spirit sigh,
They have their source in immortality!

Whence, then, shall strength, which reason's aid denies,
An equal to the mortal conflict rise?
When, on the swift pale horse, whose lightning pace,
Where'er we fly, still wins the dreadful race,
The mighty rider comes—O whence shall aid
Be drawn, to meet his rushing, undismay'd?
—Whence, but from thee, Messiah!—thou hast drain'd
The bitter cup, till not the dregs remain'd;
To thee the struggle and the pang were known,
The mystic horror—all became thine own!

But did no hand celestial succour bring,
Till scorn and anguish haply lost their sting?
Came not th' Archangel, in the final hour,
To arm thee with invulnerable power?
No, Son of God! upon thy sacred head
The shafts of wrath their tenfold fury shed,
From man averted—and thy path on high
Pass'd through the strait of fiercest agony;
For thus th' Eternal, with propitious eyes,
Received the last, th' almighty sacrifice!

But wake! be glad, ye nations! from the tomb
Is won the vict'ry, and is fled the gloom!
The vale of death in conquest hath been trod,
Break forth in joy, ye ransom'd! saith your God!
Swell ye the raptures of the song afar,
And hail with harps your bright and Morning Star

He rose! the everlasting gates of day
Received the King of Glory on his way!
The hope, the comforter of those who wept,
And the first-fruits of them, in Him that slept.

He rose, he triumph'd! he will yet sustain
Frail nature sinking in the strife of pain.
Aided by Him, around the martyr's frame
When fiercely blazed a living shroud of flame,
Hath the firm soul exulted, and the voice
Raised the victorious hymn, and cried, Rejoice!
Aided by Him, though none the bed attend,
Where the lone sufferer dies without a friend,
He whom the busy world shall miss no more
Than morn one dewdrop from her countless store
Earth's most neglected child, with trusting heart,
Call'd to the hope of glory, shall depart!

And say, cold Sophist! if by thee bereft
Of that high hope, to misery what were left?
But for the vision of the days to be,
But for the comforter, despised by thee,
Should we not wither at the Chastener's look,
Should we not sink beneath our God's rebuke,
When o'er our heads the desolating blast,
Fraught with inscrutable decrees, hath pass'd,
And the stern power who seeks the noblest prey,
Hath call'd our fairest and our best away?
Should we not madden when our eyes behold
All that we loved in marble stillness cold,
No more responsive to our smile or sigh,
Fix'd—frozen—silent—all mortality?
But for the promise, all shall yet be well,
Would not the spirit in its pangs rebel,
Beneath such clouds as darken'd, when the hand
Of wrath lay heavy on our prostrate land;

And thou,[1] just lent thy gladden'd isles to bless,
Then snatch'd from earth with all thy loveliness,
With all a nation's blessings on thy head,
O England's flower! wert gather'd to the dead?
But Thou didst teach us. Thou to every heart,
Faith's lofty lesson didst thyself impart!
When fled the hope through all thy pangs which
smiled,
When thy young bosom, o'er thy lifeless child,
Yearn'd with vain longing—still thy patient eye,
To its last light, beam'd holy constancy!
Torn from a lot in cloudless sunshine cast,
Amidst those agonies—thy first and last,
Thy pale lip, quivering with convulsive throes,
Breathed not a plaint—and settled in repose;
While bow'd thy royal head to Him, whose power
Spoke in the fiat of that midnight hour,
Who from the brightest vision of a throne,
Love, glory, empire, claim'd thee for his own,
And spread such terror o'er the sea-girt coast,
As blasted Israel, when her Ark was lost!

"It is the will of God!"—yet, yet we hear
The words which closed thy beautiful career;
Yet should we mourn thee in thy blest abode,
But for that thought—"It is the will of God!"
Who shall arraign th' Eternal's dark decree,
If not one murmur then escaped from thee?
Oh! still, though vanishing without a trace,
Thou hast not left one scion of thy race,

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[1] The Princess Charlotte.

Still may thy memory bloom our vales among,
Hallowed by freedom, and enshrined in song!
Still may thy pure, majestic spirit dwell,
Bright on the isles which loved thy name so well,
E'en as an angel, with presiding care,
To wake and guard thine own high virtues there.

For lo! the hour when storm-presaging skies
Call on the watchers of the land to rise,
To set the sign of fire on every height, (6)
And o'er the mountains rear, with patriot might,
Prepared, if summon'd, in its cause to die,
The banner of our faith, the Cross of victory!

By this hath England conquer'd — field and flood
Have own'd her sov'reignty — alone she stood,
When chains o'er all the scepter'd earth were thrown,
In high and holy singleness, alone,
But mighty in her God — and shall she now
Forget before th' Omnipotent to bow?
From the bright fountain of her glory turn,
Or bid strange fire upon his altars burn?
No! sever'd land, 'midst rocks and billows rude,
Throned in thy majesty of solitude,
Still in the deep asylum of thy breast
Shall the pure elements of greatness rest,
Virtue and faith, the tutelary powers,
Thy hearths that hallow, and defend thy towers!

Still, where thy hamlet-vales, O chosen isle!
In the soft beauty of their verdure smile,
Where yew and elm o'ershade the lowly fanes,
That guard the peasant's records and remains,

May the blest echoes of the Sabbath-bell
Sweet on the quiet of the woodlands swell,
And from each cottage-dwelling of thy glades,
When starlight glimmers through the deep'ning shades,
Devotion's voice in choral hymns arise,
And bear the land's warm incense to the skies.

There may the mother, as with anxious joy
To Heaven her lessons consecrate her boy,
Teach his young accent still the immortal lays
Of Zion's bards, in inspiration's days,
When angels, whispering through the cedar shade,
Prophetic tones to Judah's harp convey'd;
And as, her soul all glistening in her eyes,
She bids the prayer of infancy arise,
Tell of his name, who left his Throne on high,
Earth's lowliest lot to bear and sanctify,
His love divine, by keenest anguish tried,
And fondly say—"My child, for thee He died!"

NOTES.

Note 1.

Patient, because Eternal.

"He is patient, because He is eternal."

St. Augustine.

Note 2.

Fly to the City of thy Refuge, fly!

"Then he shall appoint you cities, to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither which killeth any person

at unawares.—And they shall be unto you cities of refuge from the avenger." —— Numbers, chap. 35.

Note 3.

And dark the chambers of its imag'ry.

"Every man in the chambers of his imagery."
Ezekiel, chap. 8.

Note 4.

Must drink the cup of trembling.

"Thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out." —— Isaiah. chap. 51.

Note 5.

Come in the still small voice, and whisper—peace.

"And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." —— Kings, book i. chap. 19.

Note 6.

To set the sign of fire on every height.

"And set up a sign of fire." —— Jeremiah, chap. 6.

A TALE

OF

THE SECRET TRIBUNAL.

A TALE

OF

THE SECRET TRIBUNAL.

The Secret Tribunal,[1] which attained such formidable power towards the close of the fourteenth century, is mentioned in history as an institution publicly known so early as in the year 1211. Its members, who were called Free Judges, were unknown to the people, and were bound by a tremendous oath, to deliver up their dearest friends and relatives, without exception, if they had committed any offence cognizable by the tribunal. They were also under an obligation to relate all they knew concerning the affair, to cite the accused, and, in case of his condemnation, to pursue and put him to death, wherever he might be met with. The proceedings of this tribunal were carried on at night, and with the greatest mystery; and though it was usual to summon a culprit three times before sentence was passed, yet persons obnoxious to it were sometimes accused and condemned without any citation. After condemnation, it was almost impossible for any one to escape the vengeance of the Free Judges, for their commands set thousands of assassins in motion, who had sworn not to spare the

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[1] See the works of Baron Bock and Professor Kramer.

life of their nearest relation, if required to sacrifice it, but to execute the decrees of the order with the most devoted obedience, even should they consider the object of their pursuit as the most innocent of men. Almost all persons of rank and fortune sought admission into the society; there were Free Judges even amongst the magistrates of the imperial cities, and every prince had some of their order in his council. When a member of this tribunal was not of himself strong enough to seize and put to death a criminal, he was not to lose sight of him until he met with a sufficient number of his comrades for the purpose, and these were obliged, upon his making certain signs, to lend him immediate assistance, without asking any questions. It was usual to hang up the person condemned, with a willow branch, to the first tree; but if circumstances obliged them to despatch him with a poniard, they left it in his body, that it might be known he had not been assassinated, but executed by a Free Judge. All the transactions of the *Sages* or *Seers* (as they called themselves), were enveloped in mystery, and it is even now unknown by what signs they revealed themselves to each other. At length their power became so extensive and redoubtable, that the Princes of the Empire found it necessary to unite their exertions for its suppression, in which they were at length successful.

The following account of this extraordinary association is given by Madame de Staël:—"Des juges mysterieux, inconnus l'un à l'autre, toujours masques, et se rassemblant pendant la nuit, punissoient dans le silence, et gravoient seulement sur le poignard qu'ils

enforçoient dans le sein du coupable ce mot terrible: Tribunal Secret. Ils prévenoient le condamné, en faisant crier, trois fois sous les fenêtres de sa maison, Malheur, Malheur, Malheur! Alors l'infortuné savoit que par-tout, dans l'étranger. dans son concitoyen, dans son parent même, il pouvoit trouver son meurtrier. La solitude, la foule, les villes, les campagnes, tout étoit rempli par la presence invisible de cette conscience armée qui poursuivoit les criminels. On conçoit comment cette terrible institution pouvoit être necessaire, dans un temps où chaque homme étoit fort contre tous, au lieu que tous doivent être forts contre chacun. Il falloit que la justice surprît le criminel avant qu'il pût s'en defendre; mais cette punition qui planoit dans les airs comme une ombre vengeresse, cette sentence mortelle qui pouvoit receler le sein même d'un ami, frappoit d'une invincible terreur." —— *L'Allemagne, Vol. II.*

PART I.

Night veil'd the mountains of the vine,
And storms had roused the foaming Rhine,
And, mingling with the pinewood's roar,
Its billows hoarsely chafed the shore,
While glen and cavern, to their moans,
Gave answer with a thousand tones:
Then, as the voice of storms appall'd
The peasant of the Odenwald,[1]

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[1] The Odenwald, a forest-district near the Rhine, adjoining the territories of Darmstadt.

Shuddering he deem'd, that, far on high,
'T was the wild huntsman rushing by,
Riding the blast with phantom speed,
With cry of hound, and tramp of steed,
While his fierce train, as on they flew,
Their horns in savage chorus blew,
Till rock, and tower, and convent round,
Rung to the shrill unearthly sound.

Vain dreams! far other footsteps traced
The forest paths, in secret haste;
Far other sounds were on the night,
Though lost amidst the tempest's might,
That fill'd the echoing earth and sky,
With its own awful harmony.
There stood a lone and ruin'd fane,
Far in the Odenwald's domain,
'Midst wood and rock, a deep recess
Of still and shadowy loneliness.
Long grass its pavement had o'ergrown,
The wild-flower waved o'er the altar-stone,
The night-wind rock'd the tottering pile,
As it swept along the roofless aisle,
For the forest-boughs, and the stormy sky,
Were all that minster's canopy.

Many a broken image lay
In the mossy mantle of decay,
And partial light the moonbeams darted
O'er trophies of the long departed;
For there the chiefs of other days,
The mighty, slumber'd, with their praise:

'Twas long since aught but the dews of Heaven
A tribute to their bier had given,
Long since a sound but the moaning blast
Above their voiceless home had pass'd.

So slept the proud, and with them all
The records of their fame and fall;
Helmet, and shield, and sculptured crest
Adorn'd the dwelling of their rest,
And emblems of the Holy Land
Were carved by some forgotten hand;
But the helm was broke, the shield defaced,
And the crest through weeds might scarce be traced;
And the scatter'd leaves of the northern pine
Half hid the palm of Palestine.
So slept the glorious—lowly laid,
As the peasant in his native shade;
Some hermit's tale, some shepherd's rhyme,
All that high deeds could win from time!

What footsteps move, with measured tread,
Amid those chambers of the dead?
What silent, shadowy beings glide
Low tombs and mouldering shrines beside,
Peopling the wild and solemn scene
With forms well suited to his mien?
Wanderer, away! let none intrude
On their mysterious solitude!
Lo! these are they, that awful band,
The secret Watchers of the land,
They that, unknown and uncontroll'd,
Their dark and dread tribunal hold.

They meet not in the monarch's dome,
They meet not in the chieftain's home;
But where, unbounded o'er their heads,
All heaven magnificently spreads,
And from its depths of cloudless blue
The eternal stars their deeds may view!
Where'er the flowers of the mountain sod
By roving feet are seldom trod;
Where'er the pathless forest waves,
Or the ivy clothes forsaken graves;
Where'er wild legends mark a spot,
By mortals shunn'd, but unforgot,
There, circled by the shades of night,
They judge of crimes that shrink from light,
And guilt, that deems its secret known
To the One unslumbering eye alone,
Yet hears their name with a sudden start,
As an icy touch had chill'd its heart,
For the shadow of th' avenger's hand
Rests dark and heavy on the land.

There rose a voice from the ruin's gloom,
And woke the echoes of the tomb,
As if the noble hearts beneath
Sent forth deep answers to its breath.

"When the midnight stars are burning,
And the dead to earth returning;
When the spirits of the blest
Rise upon the good man's rest;
When each whisper of the gale
Bids the cheek of guilt turn pale;

In the shadow of the hour
That o'er the soul hath deepest power,
Why thus meet we, but to call
For judgment on the criminal?
Why, but the doom of guilt to seal,
And point th' avenger's holy steel?
A fearful oath has bound our souls,
A fearful power our arm controls!
There is an ear, awake on high,
E'en to thought's whispers, ere they die:
There is an eye, whose beam pervades
All depths, all deserts, and all shades;
That ear hath heard our awful vow,
That searching eye is on us now!
Let him whose heart is unprofaned,
Whose hand no blameless blood hath stain'd—
Let him, whose thoughts no record keep
Of crimes, in silence buried deep,
Here, in the face of Heaven, accuse
The guilty whom its wrath pursues!"

'T was hushed—that voice of thrilling sound
And a dead silence reign'd around.
Then stood forth one, whose dim-seen form
Tower'd like a phantom in the storm;
Gathering his mantle, as a cloud,
With its dark folds his face to shroud,
Through pillar'd arches on he pass'd,
With stately step, and paused at last,
Where, on the altar's mouldering stone,
The fitful moonbeam brightly shone;
Then on the fearful stillness broke
Low, solemn tones, as thus he spoke:

"Before that eye, whose glance pervades
All depths, all deserts, and all shades;
Heard by that ear awake on high
E'en to thought's whispers ere they die;
With all a mortal's awe I stand,
Yet with pure heart, and stainless hand.
To Heaven I lift that hand, and call
For judgment on the criminal;
The earth is dyed with bloodshed's hues,
It cries for vengeance—I accuse!"

"Name thou the guilty! say for whom
Thou claim'st th' inevitable doom!"

"Albert of Lindheim—to the skies
The voice of blood against him cries;
A brother's blood—his hand is dyed
With the deep stain of fratricide.
One hour, one moment, hath reveal'd,
What years in darkness had conceal'd
But all in vain—the gulf of time
Refused to close upon his crime;
And guilt that slept on flowers, shall know,
The earthquake was but hush'd below!

Here, where amidst the noble dead,
Awed by their fame, he dare not tread;
Where, left by him to dark decay,
Their trophies moulder fast away:
Around us and beneath us lie
The relics of his ancestry;
The chiefs of Lindheim's ancient race,
Each in his last low dwelling-place:

But one is absent—o'er *his* grave
The palmy shades of Syria wave;
Far distant from his native Rhine,
He died unmourn'd, in Palestine;
The Pilgrim sought the Holy Land,
To perish by a brother's hand!
Peace to his soul! though o'er his bed
No dirge be pour'd, no tear be shed,
Though all he loved his name forget,
They live who shall avenge him yet!"

"Accuser! how to thee alone
Became the fearful secret known?"

"There is an hour when vain remorse
First wakes in her eternal force;
When pardon may not be retrieved,
When conscience will not be deceived.
He that beheld the victim bleed,
Beheld, and aided in the deed—
When earthly fears had lost their power
Reveal'd the tale in such an hour,
Unfolding, with his latest breath,
All that gave keener pangs to death."

"By Him, th' All-seeing and Unseen,
Who is for ever, and hath been,
And by th' Atoner's cross adored,
And by th' avenger's holy sword,
By truth eternal and divine,
Accuser! wilt thou swear to thine?"
—"The cross upon my heart is prest,
I hold the dagger to my breast;

If false the tale whose truth I swear,
Be mine the murderer's doom to bear!"

Then sternly rose the dread reply—
"His days are number'd—he must die!
There is no shadow of the night,
So deep as to conceal his flight;
Earth doth not hold so lone a waste,
But there his footstep shall be traced;
Devotion hath no shrine so blest,
That there in safety he may rest.
Where'er he treads, let Vengeance there
Around him spread her secret snare!
In the busy haunts of men,
In the still and shadowy glen,
When the social board is crown'd,
When the wine-cup sparkles round;
When his couch of sleep is prest,
And a dream his spirit's guest;
When his bosom knows no fear,
Let the dagger still be near,
Till, sudden as the lightning's dart,
Silent and swift it reach his heart!
One warning voice, one fearful word,
Ere morn beneath his towers be heard,
Then vainly may the guilty fly,
Unseen, unaided,—he must die!
Let those he loves prepare his tomb,
Let friendship lure him to his doom!
Perish his deeds, his name, his race,
Without a record or a trace!
Away! be watchful, swift, and free,
To wreak th' invisible's decree.

'Tis pass'd — th' avenger claims his prey,
On to the chase of death — away!"

And all was still — the sweeping blast
Caught not a whisper as it pass'd;
The shadowy forms were seen no more,
The tombs deserted as before;
And the wide forest waved immense,
In dark and lone magnificence.
In Lindheim's towers the feast had closed;
The song was hush'd, the bard reposed;
Sleep settled on the weary guest,
And the castle's lord retired to rest.
To rest! the captive doom'd to die,
May slumber, when his hour is nigh;
The seaman, when the billows foam,
Rock'd on the mast, may dream of home;
The warrior, on the battle's eve,
May win from care a short reprieve;
But earth and heaven alike deny
Their peace to guilt's o'erwearied eye;
And night, that brings to grief a calm,
To toil a pause, to pain a balm,
Hath spells terrific in her course,
Dread sounds and shadows, for remorse,
Voices, that long from earth had fled,
And steps and echoes from the dead;
And many a dream, whose forms arise,
Like a darker world's realities!
Call them not vain illusions — born,
But for the wise and brave to scorn!
Heaven, that the penal doom defers,
Hath yet its thousand ministers,

To scourge the heart, unseen, unknown,
In shade, in silence, and alone,
Concentrating in one brief hour
Ages of retribution's power!

If thou wouldst know the lot of those,
Whose souls are dark with guilty woes,
Ah! seek them not where pleasure's throng
Are listening to the voice of song;
Seek them not where the banquet glows,
And the red vineyard's nectar flows:
There mirth may flush the hollow cheek,
The eye of feverish joy may speak,
And smiles, the ready mask of pride,
The canker-worm within may hide:
Heed not those signs! they but delude;
Follow, and mark their solitude!

The song is hush'd, the feast is done,
And Lindheim's lord remains alone,
Alone, in silence and unrest,
With the dread secret of his breast;
Alone with anguish and with fear;
—There needs not an avenger here!
Behold him!—Why that sudden start?
Thou hear'st the beating of thy heart!
Thou hear'st the night-wind's hollow sigh,
Thou hear'st the rustling tapestry!
No sound but these may near thee be;
Sleep! all things earthly sleep—but thee.

No! there are murmurs on the air,
And a voice is heard that cries—"Despair!"

And he who trembles fain would deem
'T was the whisper of a waking dream.
Was it but this?—again 'tis there,
Again is heard—"Despair! Despair!"
'T is past—its tones have slowly died
In echoes on the mountain side;
Heard but by him, they rose, they fell,
He knew their fearful meaning well,
And shrinking from the midnight gloom,
As from the shadow of the tomb,
Yet shuddering, turn'd in pale dismay
When broke the dawn's first kindling ray,
And sought, amidst the forest wild,
Some shade where sunbeam never smiled.

Yes! hide thee, guilt!—the laughing morn
Wakes in a heaven of splendour born!
The storms that shook the mountain crest
Have sought their viewless world of rest.
High from his cliffs, with ardent gaze,
Soars the young eagle in the blaze,
Exulting, as he wings his way,
To revel in the fount of day,
And brightly past his banks of vine,
In glory, flows the monarch Rhine;
And joyous peals the vintage song
His wild luxuriant shores along,
As peasant bands, from rock and dell,
Their strains of choral transport swell;
And cliffs of bold fantastic forms,
Aspiring to the realm of storms;
And woods around, and waves below,
Catch the red Orient's deepening glow,

That lends each tower, and convent-spire,
A tinge of its ethereal fire.
Swell high the song of festal hours!
Deck ye the shrine with living flowers!
Let music o'er the waters breathe!
Let beauty twine the bridal wreath!
While she, whose blue eye laughs in light,
Whose cheek with love's own hue is bright
The fair-hair'd maid of Lindheim's hall,
Wakes to her nuptial festival.
Oh! who hath seen, in dreams that soar
To worlds the soul would fain explore,
When, for her own blest country pining,
Its beauty o'er her thought is shining,
Some form of heaven, whose cloudless eye
Was all one beam of ecstasy!
Whose glorious brow no traces wore
Of guilt, or sorrow known before!
Whose smile, undimm'd by aught of earth,
A sunbeam of immortal birth,
Spoke of bright realms, far distant lying,
Where love and joy are both undying!
E'en thus—a vision of delight,
A beam to gladden mortal sight,
A flower whose head no storm had bow'd,
Whose leaves ne'er droop'd beneath a cloud;
Thus, by the world unstain'd, untried,
Seem'd that beloved and lovely bride;
A being all too soft and fair,
One breath of earthly woe to bear!
Yet lives there many a lofty mind,
In light and fragile form enshrined;

And oft smooth cheek, and smiling eye,
Hide strength to suffer and to die!
Judge not of woman's heart in hours
That strew her path with summer flowers,
When joy's full cup is mantling high,
When flattery's blandishments are nigh;
Judge her not then! within her breast
Are energies unseen, that rest!
They wait their call—and grief alone
May make the soul's deep secrets known.
Yes! let her smile, 'midst pleasure's train
Leading the reckless and the vain!
Firm on the scaffold she hath stood,
Besprinkled with the martyr's blood;
Her voice the patriot's heart hath steel'd,
Her spirit glow'd on battle-field;
Her courage freed from dungeon's gloom
The captive brooding o'er his doom;
Her faith the fallen monarch saved,
Her love the tyrant's fury braved;
No scene of danger or despair,
But she hath won her triumph there!

Away! nor cloud the festal morn
With thoughts of boding sadness borne!
Far other, lovelier dreams are thine,
Fair daughter of a noble line!
Young Ella! from thy tower, whose height
Hath caught the flush of Eastern light,
Watching, while soft the morning air
Parts on thy brow the sunny hair,
Yon bark, that o'er the calm blue tide
Bears thy loved warrior to his bride—

He, whose high deeds romantic praise
Hath hallow'd with a thousand lays.

He came—that youthful chief—he came
That favour'd lord of love and fame!
His step was hurried—as of one
Who seeks a voice within to shun;
His cheek was varying, and express'd
The conflict of a troubled breast:
His eye was anxious—doubt, and dread,
And a stern grief, might there be read;
Yet all that mark'd his alter'd mien
Seem'd struggling to be still unseen.

With shrinking heart, with nameless fear,
Young Ella met the brow austere,
And the wild look, which seem'd to fly
The timid welcome of her eye.
Was that a lover's gaze, which chill'd
The soul, its awful sadness thrill'd?
A lover's brow, so darkly fraught
With all the heaviest gloom of thought?
She trembled—ne'er to grief inured,
By its dread lessons ne'er matured:
Unused to meet a glance of less
Than all a parent's tenderness,
Shuddering she felt, through every sense,
The death-like faintness of suspense.

High o'er the windings of the flood,
On Lindheim's terraced rocks they stood,
Whence the free sight afar might stray
O'er that imperial river's way,

Which, rushing from its Alpine source,
Makes one long triumph of its course,
Rolling in tranquil grandeur by,
'Midst Nature's noblest pageantry.
But they, o'er that majestic scene,
With clouded brow and anxious mien,
In silence gazed:—for Ella's heart
Fear'd its own terrors to impart;
And he, who vainly strove to hide
His pangs, with all a warrior's pride,
Seem'd gathering courage to unfold
Some fearful tale that must be told.

At length his mien, his voice, obtain'd
A calm, that seem'd by conflicts gain'd,
And thus he spoke—"Yes! gaze a while
On the bright scenes that round thee smile;
For, if thy love be firm and true,
Soon must thou bid their charms adieu!
A fate hangs o'er us, whose decree
Must bear me far from them or thee;
Our path is one of snares and fear,
I lose thee if I linger here!
Droop not, beloved! thy home shall rise
As fair, beneath far distant skies;
As fondly tenderness and truth
Shall cherish there thy rose of youth.
But speak! and when yon hallow'd shrine
Hath heard the vows which make thee mine,
Say, wilt thou fly with me, no more
To tread thine own loved mountain-shore,
But share and soothe, repining not
The bitterness of exile's lot?"

"Ulric! thou know'st how dearly loved
The scenes where first my childhood roved;
The woods, the rocks, that tower supreme
Above our own majestic stream,
The halls where first my heart beat high
To the proud songs of chivalry.
All, all are dear—yet *these* are ties
Affection well may sacrifice;
Loved though they be, where'er thou art,
There is the country of my heart!
Yet, is there one, who, reft of me,
Were lonely as a blasted tree;
One, who still hoped my hand should close
His eyes, in Nature's last repose;
Eve gathers round him—on his brow
Already rests the wintry snow;
His form is bent, his features wear
The deepening lines of age and care,
His faded eye hath lost its fire;
Thou wouldst not tear me from my sire?
Yet tell me all—thy woes impart,
My Ulric! to a faithful heart,
Which sooner far—oh, doubt not this—
Would share *thy* pangs, than others' bliss!"

"Ella, what would'st thou?—'tis a tale
Will make that cheek as marble pale!
Yet what avails it to conceal
All thou too soon must know and feel?
It must, it must be told—prepare,
And nerve that gentle heart to bear—
But I—oh, was it then for *me*
The herald of thy woes to be!

Thy soul's bright calmness to destroy,
And wake thee first from dreams of joy?
Forgive!—I would not ruder tone
Should make the fearful tidings known,
I would not that unpitying eyes
Should coldly watch thine agonies!
Better 'twere mine—that task severe,
To cloud thy breast with grief and fear!

"Hast thou not heard, in legends old,
Wild tales that turn the life-blood cold,
Of those who meet in cave or glen,
Far from the busy walks of men;
Those who mysterious vigils keep,
When earth is wrapt in shades and sleep,
To judge of crimes, like Him on high,
In stillness and in secresy?
Th' unknown avengers, whose decree
'Tis fruitless to resist or flee?
Whose name hath cast a spell of power
O'er peasant's cot and chieftain's tower?
Thy sire—oh, Ella! hope is fled!
Think of him, mourn him, as the dead!
Their sentence, theirs, hath seal'd his doom
And thou may'st weep as o'er his tomb!
Yes, weep!—relieve thy heart oppress'd,
Pour forth thy sorrows on my breast!
Thy cheek is cold—thy tearless eye
Seems fix'd in frozen vacancy;
Oh, gaze not thus!—thy silence break,
Speak! if 'tis but in anguish, speak!"

She spoke at length, in accents low
Of wild and half-indignant woe:
—"*He* doom'd to perish! *he* decreed
By their avenging arm to bleed!
He, the renown'd in holy fight,
The Paynim's scourge, the Christian's might!
Ulric! what mean'st thou?—not a thought
Of that high mind with guilt is fraught!
Say, for which glorious trophy won,
Which deed of martial prowess done;
Which battle-field, in days gone by,
Gain'd by his valour, must he die?
Away! 'tis not *his* lofty name
Their sentence hath consign'd to shame;
'Tis not his life they seek—recall
Thy words, or say he shall not fall!"

Then sprung forth tears, whose blest relief
Gave pleading softness to her grief:
"And wilt thou not, by all the ties
Of our affianced love," she cries,
"By all my soul hath fix'd on thee,
Of cherish'd hope for years to be,
Wilt *thou* not aid him? wilt not thou
Shield his grey head from danger now?
And didst thou not, in childhood's morn,
That saw our young affection born,
Hang round his neck, and climb his knee,
Sharing his parent-smile with me?
Kind, gentle Ulric! best beloved!
Now be thy faith in danger proved!
Though snares and terrors round him wait,
Thou wilt not leave him to his fate!

Turn not away in cold disdain!
—Shall thine own Ella plead in vain?
How art thou changed! and must I bear
That frown, that stern, averted air?
What mean they?"

"Maiden, need'st thou ask?
These features wear no specious mask!
Doth sorrow mark this brow and eye
With characters of mystery?
This—*this* is anguish!—can it be?
And plead'st thou for thy sire to *me?*
Know though thy prayers a death-pang give,
He must not meet my sight—and live!
Well may'st thou shudder!—of the band
Who watch in secret o'er the land,
Whose thousand swords 'tis vain to shun,
Th' unknown, th' unslumbering—I am one!
My arm defend him!—what were *then*
Each vow that binds the souls of men,
Sworn on the cross, and deeply seal'd
By rites that may not be reveal'd?
—A breeze's breath, an echo's tone,
A passing sound, forgot when gone!
Nay, shrink not from me—I would fly,
That he by other hands may die!
What! think'st thou I would live to trace
Abhorrence in that angel-face?
Beside thee should the lover stand,
The father's life-blood on his brand?
No! I have bade my home adieu,
For other scenes mine eyes must view;

Look on me, love! now all is known,
O Ella! must I fly alone?"

But she was changed; scarce heaved her breath,
She stood like one prepared for death,
And wept no more; then, casting down
From her fair brows the nuptial crown,
As joy's last vision from her heart,
Cried, with sad firmness, "We must part!
'Tis past—these bridal flowers, so frail
They may not brook one stormy gale,
Survive—too dear as still thou art,
Each hope they imaged—we must part!
One struggle yet—and all is o'er—
We love—and may we meet no more!
Oh! little know'st thou of the power
Affection lends in danger's hour,
To deem that fate should thus divide
My footsteps from a father's side!
Speed thou to other shores—I go
To share his wanderings and his woe;
Where'er his path of thorns may lead,
Whate'er his doom, by Heaven decreed,
If there be guardian powers above,
To nerve the heart of filial love;
If courage may be won by prayer,
Or strength by duty—I can bear!
Farewell!—though in that sound be years
Of blighted hopes and fruitless tears,
Though the soul vibrate to its knell
Of joys departed—yet, farewell!"

Was *this* the maid who seem'd, erewhile,
Born but to meet life's vernal smile?
A being, almost on the wing,
As an embodied breeze of spring?
A child of beauty and of bliss,
Sent from some purer sphere to this,
Not, in her exile, to sustain
The trial of one earthly pain;
But, as a sunbeam, on to move,
Wak'ning all hearts to joy and love?
That airy form, with footsteps free,
And radiant glance—could this be she?
From her fair cheek the rose was gone,
Her eye's blue sparkle thence had flown,
Of all its vivid glow bereft,
Each playful charm her lip had left;
But what were these? on that young face,
Far nobler beauty fill'd their place!
'Twas not the pride that scorns to bend,
Though all the bolts of Heaven descend;
Not the fierce grandeur of despair,
That half exults its fate to dare;
Nor that wild energy which leads
Th' enthusiast to fanatic deeds:
Her mien, by sorrow unsubdued,
Was fix'd in silent fortitude;
Not in its haughty strength elate,
But calmly, mournfully sedate.
'Twas strange, yet lovely to behold
That spirit in so fair a mould,
As if a rose-tree's tender form,
Unbent, unbroke, should meet the storm.

One look she cast, where firmness strove
With the deep pangs of parting love;
One tear a moment in her eye
Dimm'd the pure light of constancy;
And pressing, as to still her heart,
She turn'd in silence to depart.
But Ulric, as to frenzy wrought,
Then started from his trance of thought:
"Stay thee, oh, stay!—it must not be—
All, all were well resign'd for thee!
Stay! till my soul each vow disown,
But those which make me thine alone!
If there be guilt—there is no shrine
More holy than that heart of thine;
There be my crime absolved—I take
The cup of shame for thy dear sake.
Of *shame!* oh no! to virtue true,
Where *thou* art, there is glory too!
Go now! and to thy sire impart,
He hath a shield in Ulric's heart,
And thou a home!—remain, or flee,
In life, in death—I follow thee!"

"There shall not rest one cloud of shame,
Oh Ulric! on thy lofty name;
There shall not one accusing word
Against thy spotless faith be heard!
Thy path is where the brave rush on,
Thy course must be where palms are won;
Where banners wave, and falchions glare,
Son of the mighty! be thou there!
Think on the glorious names that shine
Along thy sire's majestic line;

Oh, last of that illustrious race!
Thou wert not born to meet disgrace!
Well, well I know each grief, each pain,
Thy spirit nobly could sustain:
E'en I unshrinking see them near,
And what hast thou to do with fear?
But when hath warriors calmly borne
The cold and bitter smile of scorn?
'Tis not for thee — thy soul hath force
To cope with all things — but remorse;
And this my brightest thought shall be,
Thou hast not braved its pangs for me.
Go! break thou not one solemn vow!
Closed be the fearful conflict now;
Go! but forget not how my heart
Still at thy name will proudly start,
When chieftains hear, and minstrels tell,
Thy deeds of glory — fare thee well!"

And thus they parted — why recall
The scene of anguish known to all?
The burst of tears, the blush of pride,
That fain those fruitless tears would hide;
The lingering look, the last embrace,
Oh! what avails it to retrace?
They parted — in that bitter word
A thousand tones of grief are heard,
Whose deeply-seated echoes rest
In the far cells of every breast;
Who hath not known, who shall not know
That keen, yet most familiar woe?

Where'er affection's home is found,
It meets her on the holy ground;
The cloud of every summer hour,
The canker-worm of every flower;
Who but hath proved, or yet shall prove,
That mortal agony of love?

The autumn moon slept bright and still
On fading wood and purple hill;
The vintager had hush'd his lay,
The fisher shunn'd the blaze of day,
And silence, o'er each green recess,
Brooded in misty sultriness.
But soon a low and measured sound
Broke on the deep repose around;
From Lindheim's tower a glancing oar
Bade the stream ripple to the shore.
Sweet was that sound of waves which parted
The fond, the true, the noble-hearted;
And smoothly seem'd the bark to glide,
And brightly flow'd the reckless tide,
Though, mingling with its current, fell
The last warm tears of love's farewell.

Part II.

Sweet is the gloom of forest shades,
Their pillar'd walks and dim arcades,
With all the thousand flowers that blow,
A waste of loveliness, below.
To him whose soul the world would fly,
For Nature's lonely majesty:

To bard, when wrapt in mighty themes,
To lover, lost in fairy dreams,
To hermit, whose prophetic thought
By fits a gleam of heaven hath caught,
And, in the visions of his rest,
Held bright communion with the blest;
'T is sweet, but solemn — there alike
Silence and sound with awe can strike.
The deep Eolian murmur made
By sighing breeze and rustling shade,
And cavern'd fountain gushing nigh,
And wild-bee's plaintive lullaby,
Or the dead stillness of the bowers,
When dark the summer-tempest lowers;
When silent Nature seems to wait
The gathering Thunder's voice of fate,
When the aspen scarcely waves in air,
And the clouds collect for the lightning's glare,
Each, each alike is awful there,
And thrills the soul with feelings high,
As some majestic harmony.

But she, the maid, whose footsteps traced
Each green retreat, in breathless haste,
Young Ella linger'd not, to hear
The wood-notes, lost on mourner's ear;
The shivering leaf, the breeze's play,
The fountain's gush, the wild-bird's lay;
These charm not now — her sire she sought,
With trembling frame, with anxious thought,
And, starting, if a forest deer,
But moved the rustling branches near,
First felt that innocence may fear.

She reach'd a lone and shadowy dell,
Where the free sunbeam never fell;
'T was twilight there at summer-noon,
Deep night beneath the harvest-moon,
And scarce might one bright star be seen
Gleaming the tangled boughs between;
For many a giant rock around,
Dark, in terrific grandeur, frown'd,
And the ancient oaks, that waved on high,
Shut out each glimpse of the blessed sky;
There the cold spring, in its shadowy cave,
Ne'er to Heaven's beam one sparkle gave,
And the wild-flower, on its brink that grew,
Caught not from day one glowing hue.

'T was said, some fearful deed untold,
Had stain'd that scene in days of old;
Tradition o'er the haunt had thrown
A shade yet deeper than its own,
And still, amidst th' umbrageous gloom,
Perchance above some victim's tomb,
O'ergrown with ivy and with moss,
There stood a rudely-sculptured Cross,
Which haply silent record bore,
Of guilt and penitence of yore.

Who by that holy sign was kneeling,
With brow unutter'd pangs revealing,
Hands clasp'd convulsively in prayer,
And lifted eyes and streaming hair,
And cheek, all pale as marble mould,
Seen by the moonbeam's radiance cold?

Was it some image of despair,
Still fix'd that stamp of woe to bear?
—Oh! ne'er could Art her forms have wrought,
To speak such agonies of thought!
Those death-like features gave to view
A mortal's pangs, too deep and true!
Starting he rose, with frenzied eye,
As Ella's hurried step drew nigh;
He turn'd, with aspect darkly wild,
Trembling he stood—before his child!
On, with a burst of tears, she sprung,
And to her father's bosom clung.

"Away! what seek'st thou here?" he cried,
"Art thou not now thine Ulric's bride?
Hence, leave me, leave me to await,
In solitude, the storm of Fate;
Thou know'st not what my doom may be,
Ere evening comes in peace to thee."

"My father! shall the joyous throng
Swell high for me the bridal song?
Shall the gay nuptial board be spread,
The festal garland bind my head,
And thou, in grief, in peril, roam,
And make the wilderness thy home?
No! I am here, with thee to share
All suffering mortal strength may bear;
And, oh! whate'er thy foes decree,
In life, in death, in chains, or free;
Well, well I feel, in thee secure,
Thy heart and hand alike are pure!"

Then was there meaning in his look,
Which deep that trusting spirit shook;
So wildly did each glance express
The strife of shame and bitterness,
As thus he spoke: "Fond dreams, oh hence!
Is this the mien of Innocence?
This furrow'd brow, this restless eye,
Read thou this fearful tale—and fly!
Is it enough? or must I seek
For *words*, the tale of guilt to speak?
Then be it so—I will not doom
Thy youth to wither in its bloom;
I will not see thy tender frame
Bow'd to the earth with fear and shame
No! though I teach thee to abhor
The sire, so fondly loved before;
Though the dread effort rend my breast,
Yet shalt thou leave me and be blest!
Oh! bitter penance! thou wilt turn
Away in horror and in scorn;
Thy looks, that still through all the past
Affection's gentlest beams have cast,
As lightning on my heart will fall,
And I must mark and bear it all!
Yet though of life's best ties bereaved,
Thou shalt not, must not be deceived!
I linger—let me speed the tale,
Ere voice, and thought, and memory fail.
Why should I falter thus, to tell
What Heaven so long hath known too well?
Yes! though from mortal sight conceal'd,
There hath a brother's blood appeal'd!

He died—'twas not where banners wave
And war-steeds trample on the brave;
He died—it was in Holy Land;
Yet fell he not by Paynim hand;
He sleeps not with his sires at rest,
With trophied shield and knightly crest;
Unknown his grave to kindred eyes,
—But I can tell thee where he lies!
It was a wild and savage spot,
But once beheld—and ne'er forgot!
I see it now—that haunted scene
My spirit's dwelling still hath been;
And he is there—I see him laid
Beneath that palm-tree's lonely shade.
The fountain-wave that sparkles nigh,
Bears witness with its crimson dye!
I see th' accusing glance he raised,
Ere that dim eye by death was glazed;
—Ne'er will that parting look forgive!
I still behold it—and I live!
I live! from hope, from mercy driven,
A mark for all the shafts of Heaven!

"Yet had I wrongs: by fraud he won
My birth-right—and my child, my son,
Heir to high name, high fortune born,
Was doom'd to penury and scorn,
An alien 'midst his fathers' halls,
An exile from his native walls.
Could I bear this?—the rankling thought,
Deep, dark, within my bosom wrought;
Some serpent, kindling hate and guile,
Lurk'd in my infant's rosy smile,

And when his accents lisp'd my name,
They woke my inmost heart to flame!
I struggled — are there evil powers
That claim their own ascendant hours?
— O! what should thine unspotted soul
Or know or fear of *their* control?
Why on the fearful conflict dwell?
Vainly I struggled — and I fell:
Cast down from every hope of bliss,
Too well thou know'st to what abyss!

"'Twas done — that moment hurried by
To darken all eternity!
Years roll'd away, long, evil years,
Of woes, of fetters, and of fears;
Nor aught but vain remorse I gain'd,
By the deep guilt my soul which stain'd;
For, long a captive in the lands
Where Arabs tread their burning sands,
The haunted midnight of the mind
Was round me while in chains I pined,
By all forgotten save by one
Dread presence — which I could not shun.

"How oft, when o'er the silent waste
Nor path nor land-mark might be traced,
When slumbering by the watch-fire's ray,
The Wanderers of the Desert lay,
And stars, as o'er an ocean, shone,
Vigil I kept — but not alone!
That form, that image from the dead,
Still walk'd the wild with soundless tread!

I've seen it in the fiery blast,
I've seen it where the sand-storms pass'd;
Beside the Desert's fount it stood,
Tinging the clear cold wave with blood;
And e'en when viewless, by the fear
Curdling my veins, I knew 'twas near!
— *Was* near! — I feel th' unearthly thrill,
Its power is on my spirit still!
A mystic influence, undefined,
The spell, the shadow of my mind!

"Wilt thou yet linger? — time speeds on;
One last farewell, and then begone!
Unclasp the hands that shade thy brow,
And let me read thine aspect *now!*
No! stay thee yet, and learn the meed
Heaven's justice to my crime decreed.
Slow came the day that broke my chain
But I at length was free again;
And freedom brings a burst of joy,
E'en guilt itself can scarce destroy.
I thought upon my own fair towers,
My native Rhine's gay vineyard bowers,
And, in a father's visions press'd
Thee and thy brother to my breast.

"'Twas but in visions — canst thou yet
Recall the moment when we met?
Thy step to greet me lightly sprung,
Thy arms around me fondly clung;
Scarce aught than infant-seraph less,
Seem'd thy pure childhood's loveliness;

But he was gone — that son, for whom
I rush'd on guilt's eternal doom,
He for whose sake alone were given
My peace on earth, my hope in Heaven,
He met me not. — A ruthless hand,
Whose name with terror fill'd the land,
Fierce outlaws of the wood and wild,
Had reft the father of his child.
Foes to my race, the hate they nursed,
Full on that cherish'd scion burst.
Unknown his fate. — No parent nigh,
My boy! my first-born! didst thou die?
Or did they spare thee for a life
Of shame, of rapine, and of strife?
Livest thou, unfriended, unallied,
A wanderer, lost without a guide?
Oh! to thy fate's mysterious gloom
Blest were the darkness of the tomb!

"Ella! 'tis done — my guilty heart
Before thee all unveil'd — depart!
Few pangs 't will cost thee now to fly
From one so stain'd, so lost, as I;
Yet peace to thine untainted breast,
E'en though it hate me — be thou blest!
Farewell! thou shalt not linger here;
E'en now th' avenger may be near:
Where'er I turn, the foe, the snare;
The dagger, may be ambush'd there;
One hour — and haply all is o'er,
And we must meet on earth no more;
No, nor beyond! — to those pure skies
Where thou shalt be, I may not rise;

Heaven's will for ever parts our lot,
Yet, oh! my child! abhor me not!
Speak once! to soothe this broken heart,
Speak to me once! and then depart!"

But still — as if each pulse were dead,
Mute — as the power of speech were fled,
Pale — as if life-blood ceased to warm
The marble beauty of her form;
On the dark rock she lean'd her head,
That seem'd as there 'twere riveted,
And dropt the hands, till then which press'd
Her burning brow, or throbbing breast.
There beam'd no tear-drop in her eye,
And from her lip there breathed no sigh,
And on her brow no trace there dwelt,
That told she suffer'd or she felt.
All that once glow'd, or smiled, or beam'd,
Now fix'd, and quench'd, and frozen seem'd;
And long her sire, in wild dismay,
Deem'd her pure spirit pass'd away.

But life return'd. O'er that cold frame
One deep convulsive shudder came,
And a faint light her eye relumed,
And sad resolve her mien assumed;
But there was horror in the gaze,
Which yet to his she dare not raise,
And her sad accents, wild and low,
As rising from a depth of woe,
At first with hurried trembling broke,
But gather'd firmness as she spoke.

"I leave thee not—whate'er betide,
My footstep shall not quit thy side;
Pangs, keen as death, my soul may thrill,
But yet thou art my father still!
And, oh! if stain'd by guilty deed,
For some kind spirit, tenfold need,
To speak of Heaven's absolving love,
And waft desponding thought above.
Is there not power in mercy's wave,
The blood-stain from thy soul to lave?
Is there not balm to heal despair,
In tears, in penitence, in prayer?
My father! kneel at His pure shrine
Who died to expiate guilt like thine,
Weep—and my tears with thine shall blend,
Pray—while my prayers with thine ascend,
And, as our mingling sorrows rise,
Heaven will relent, though earth despise!"

"My child, my child! these bursting tears,
The first mine eyes have shed for years,
Though deepest conflicts they express,
Yet flow not all in bitterness!
Oh! thou hast bid a wither'd heart
From desolation's slumber start,
Thy voice of pity and of love
Seems o'er its icy depths to move
E'en as a breeze of health, which brings
Life, hope, and healing, on its wings.
And there is mercy yet! I feel
Its influence o'er my spirit steal;
How welcome were each pang below,
If guilt might be atoned by woe!

Think'st thou I yet may be forgiven?
Shall prayers unclose the gate of Heaven?
Oh! if it yet avail to plead,
If judgment be not yet decreed,
Our hearts shall blend their suppliant cry,
Till pardon shall be seal'd on high!
Yet, yet I shrink!—will Mercy shed
Her dews upon this fallen head?
—Kneel, Ella, kneel! till full and free
Descend forgiveness, won by thee!"

They knelt:—before the Cross, that sign
Of love eternal and divine;
That symbol, which so long hath stood
A rock of strength, on time's dark flood,
Clasp'd by despairing hands, and laved
By the warm tears of nations saved;
In one deep prayer their spirits blent,
The guilty and the innocent;
Youth, pure as if from Heaven its birth,
Age, soil'd with every stain of earth,
Knelt, offering up one heart, one cry,
One sacrifice of agony.

Oh! blest, though bitter be their source,
Though dark the fountain of remorse,
Blest are the tears which pour from thence.
Th' atoning stream of penitence!
And let not pity check the tide
By which the heart is purified;
Let not vain comfort turn its course,
Or timid love repress its force!

Go! bind the flood, whose waves expand,
To bear luxuriance o'er the land;
Forbid the life-restoring rains
To fall on Afric's burning plains;
Close up the fount that gush'd to cheer
The pilgrim o'er the waste who trode
But check thou not one holy tear,
Which Penitence devotes to God!

Through scenes so lone the wild-deer ne'er
Was roused by huntsman's bugle there;
So rude, that scarce might human eye
Sustain their dread sublimity;
So awful, that the timid swain,
Nurtured amidst their dark domain,
Had peopled, with unearthly forms,
Their mists, their forests, and their storms;
She, whose blue eye, of laughing light,
Once made each festal scene more bright;
Whose voice in song of joy was sweetest,
Whose step in dance of mirth was fleetest,
By torrent-wave, and mountain-brow,
Is wandering as an outcast now,
To share with Lindheim's fallen chief,
His shame, his terror, and his grief.

Hast thou not mark'd the ruin's flower,
That blooms in solitary grace,
And, faithful to its mouldering tower,
Waves in the banner's place?
From those grey haunts renown hath pass'd,
Time wins his heritage at last;

This day of glory hath gone by,
With all its pomp and minstrelsy;
Yet still the flower of golden hues
There loves its fragrance to diffuse,
To fallen and forsaken things
With constancy unalter'd clings,
And, smiling o'er the wreck of state,
With beauty clothes the desolate.

E'en such was she, the fair-hair'd maid,
In all her light of youth array'd,
Forsaking every joy below,
To soothe a guilty parent's woe,
And clinging thus, in beauty's prime,
To the dark ruin made by crime.
Oh! ne'er did Heaven's propitious eyes
Smile on a purer sacrifice;
Ne'er did young love, at duty's shrine,
More nobly brighter hopes resign!
O'er her own pangs she brooded not,
Nor sunk beneath her bitter lot;
No! that pure spirit's lofty worth
Still rose more buoyantly from earth,
And drew from an eternal source
Its gentle, yet triumphant force;
Roused by affliction's chastening might
To energies more calmly bright,
Like the wild harp of airy sigh,
Woke by the storm to harmony!
He that in mountain holds hath sought
A refuge for unconquer'd thought,
A charter'd home, where Freedom's child
Might rear her altars in the wild,

And fix her quenchless torch on high,
A beacon for Eternity;
Or they, whose martyr-spirits wage
Proud war with Persecution's rage,
And to the deserts bear the faith
That bids them smile on chains and death;
Well may *they* draw, from all around,
Of grandeur clothed in form and sound,
From the deep power of earth and sky,
Wild nature's might of majesty,
Strong energies, immortal fires,
High hopes, magnificent desires!

But dark, terrific, and austere,
To *him* doth Nature's mien appear,
Who, 'midst her wilds, would seek repose
From guilty pangs and vengeful foes!
For him the wind hath music dread,
A dirge-like voice that mourns the dead;
The forest's whisper breathes a tone,
Appalling, as from worlds unknown;
The mystic gloom of wood and cave
Is fill'd with shadows of the grave;
In noon's deep calm the sunbeams dart
A blaze that seems to search his heart;
The pure, eternal stars of night,
Upbraid him with their silent light,
And the dread spirit, which pervades
And hallows earth's most lonely shades,
In every scene, in every hour,
Surrounds him with chastising power,
With nameless fear his soul to thrill,
Heard, felt, acknowledged, present still!

'T was the chilly close of an Autumn day,
And the leaves fell thick o'er the wanderers' way,
The rustling pines, with a hollow sound,
Foretold the tempest gathering round,
And the skirts of the western clouds were spread
With a tinge of wild and stormy red,
That seem'd, through the twilight forest bowers
Like the glare of a city's blazing towers;
But they, who far from cities fled,
And shrunk from the print of human tread,
Had reach'd a desert-scene unknown,
So strangely wild, so deeply lone,
That a nameless feeling, unconfess'd
And undefined, their souls oppress'd.
Rocks piled on rocks, around them hurl'd,
Lay like the ruins of a world,
Left by an earthquake's final throes
In deep and desolate repose;
Things of eternity, whose forms
Bore record of ten thousand storms!
While, rearing its colossal crest
In sullen grandeur o'er the rest,
One, like a pillar, vast and rude,
Stood monarch of the solitude.
Perchance by Roman conqueror's hand
Th' enduring monument was plann'd:
Or Odin's sons, in days gone by,
Had shaped its rough immensity,
To rear, 'midst mountain, rock, and wood,
A temple meet for rites of blood.
But they were gone, who might have told
That secret of the times of old,

And there, in silent scorn, it frown'd,
O'er all its vast coevals round.
Darkly those giant masses lower'd,
Countless and motionless they tower'd;
No wild-flower o'er their summits hung,
No fountain from their caverns sprung;
Yet ever on the wanderers' ear
Murmur'd a sound of waters near,
With music deep of lulling falls,
And louder gush, at intervals.
Unknown its source—nor spring nor stream
Caught the red sunset's lingering gleam,
But ceaseless, from its hidden caves,
Arose that mystic voice of waves. (1)
Yet bosom'd 'midst that savage scene,
One chosen spot of gentler mien
Gave promise to the pilgrim's eye
Of shelter from the tempest nigh.
Glad sight! the ivied cross it bore,
The sculptured saint that crown'd its door;
Less welcome now were monarch's dome,
Than that low cell, some hermit's home.
Thither the outcasts bent their way,
By the last lingering gleam of day,
When from a cavern'd rock, which cast
Deep shadows o'er them as they pass'd,
A form, a warrior-form of might,
As from earth's bosom, sprung to sight.
His port was lofty—yet the heart
Shrunk from him with recoiling start;
His mien was youthful—yet his face
Had nought of youth's ingenuous grace;

Nor chivalrous, nor tender thought,
Its traces on his brow had wrought;
Yet dwelt no fierceness in his eye,
But calm and cold severity,
A spirit haughtily austere,
Stranger to pity as to fear.
It seem'd as pride had thrown a veil
O'er that dark brow and visage pale,
Leaving the searcher nought to guess,
All was so fix'd and passionless.

He spoke—and they who heard the tone
Felt, deeply felt, all hope was flown.
"I've sought thee far in forest bowers,
I've sought thee long in peopled towers,
I've borne the dagger of th' UNKNOWN
Through scenes explored by me alone;
My search is closed—nor toils, nor fears,
Repel the servant of the Seers;
We meet—'tis vain to strive or fly,
Albert of Lindheim—thou must die!"

Then with clasp'd h s the fair-hair'd maid
Sunk at his feet and wildly pray'd:—
"Stay, stay thee! sheathe that lifted steel!
Oh! thou art human, and canst feel!
Hear me! if e'er 'twas thine to prove
The blessing of a parent's love;
By thine own father's hoary hair,
By her who gave thee being, spare!
Did they not, o'er thy infant years,
Keep watch, in sleepless hopes and fears!

Young warrior! thou wilt heed my prayers,
As thou would'st hope for grace to theirs!"

But cold th' Avenger's look remain'd,
His brow its rigid calm maintain'd:
"Maiden! 'tis vain—my bosom ne'er
Was conscious of a parent's care;
The nurture of my infant years
Froze in my soul the source of tears;
'Tis not for me to pause or melt,
Or feel as happier hearts have felt.
Away! the hour of fate goes by,
Thy prayers are fruitless—he must die!"

"Rise, Ella! rise," with steadfast brow
The father spoke; unshrinking now,
As if from heaven a martyr's strength
Had settled on his soul at length;
"Kneel thou no more, my noble child,
Thou by no taint of guilt defiled;
Kneel not to man!—for mortal prayer,
Oh! when did mortal vengeance spare?
Since hope of earthly aid is flown,
Lift thy pure hands to Heaven alone,
And know, to calm thy suffering heart.
My spirit is resign'd to part;
Trusting in Him, who reads and knows
This guilty breast, with all its woes.
Rise! I would bless thee once again,
Be still, be firm—for all is vain!"

And she *was* still—she heard him not,
Her prayers were hush'd—her pangs forgot;

All thought, all memory pass'd away,
Silent and motionless she lay,
In a brief death, a blest suspense,
Alike of agony and sense.
She saw not when the dagger gleam'd
In the last red light from the west that stream'd:
She mark'd not when the life-blood's flow
Came rushing to the mortal blow;
While, unresisting, sunk her sire,
Yet gather'd firmness to expire,
Mingling a warrior's courage high,
With a penitent's humility.
And o'er him there th' Avenger stood,
And watch'd the victim's ebbing blood,
Still calm, as if his faithful hand
Had but obey'd some just command,
Some power, whose stern, yet righteous will,
He deem'd it virtue to fulfil,
And triumph'd, when the palm was won,
For duty's task austerely done.

But a feeling dread, and undefined,
A mystic presage of the mind,
With strange and sudden impulse ran
Chill through the heart of the dying man,
And his thoughts found voice, and his bosom breath,
And it seem'd as fear suspended death,
And Nature from her terrors drew
Fresh energy, and vigour new.

"Thou said'st thy lonely bosom ne'er
Was conscious of a parent's care;

Thou saidst thy lot, in childhood's years,
Froze in thy soul the source of tears:
The time will come, when thou, with me,
The judgment-throne of God wilt see.
Oh! by thy hopes of mercy, then,
By His blest love who died for men,
By each dread rite, and shrine, and vow,
Avenger! I adjure thee now!
To him who bleeds beneath thy steel,
Thy lineage and thy name reveal,
And haste thee! for his closing ear
Hath little more on earth to hear—
Haste! for the spirit, almost flown,
Is lingering for thy words alone."

Then first a shade, resembling fear,
Pass'd o'er th' Avenger's mien austere;
A nameless awe his features cross'd,
Soon in their haughty coldness lost.

"What wouldst thou? Ask the rock and wild,
And bid them tell thee of their child!
Ask the rude winds, and angry skies,
Whose tempests were his lullabies!
His chambers were the cave and wood,
His fosterers men of wrath and blood;
Outcasts alike of earth and heaven,
By wrongs to desperation driven!
Who, in their pupil, now could trace
The features of a nobler race?
Yet such was mine!—if one who cast
A look of anguish o'er the past,

Bore faithful record on the day,
When penitent in death he lay.
But still deep shades my prospects veil,
He died—and told but half the tale;
With him it sleeps—I only know
Enough for stern and silent woe,
For vain ambition's deep regret,
For hopes deceived, deceiving yet,
For dreams of pride that vainly tell
How high a lot had suited well
The heir of some illustrious line,
Heroes and chieftains of the Rhine!"

Then swift through Albert's bosom pass'd
One pang, the keenest and the last,
Ere with his spirit fled the fears,
The sorrows, and the pangs of years,
And, while his grey hairs swept the dust,
Faltering he murmur'd, "Heaven is just!
For thee that deed of guilt was done,
By thee avenged, my Son! my Son!"

The day was closed—the moonbeam shed
Light on the living and the dead,
And as through rolling clouds it broke,
Young Ella from her trance awoke—
Awoke to bear, to feel, to know
E'en more than all an orphan's woe.
Oh! ne'er did moonbeam's light serene
With beauty clothe a sadder scene!
There, cold in death, the father slept,
There, pale in woe, the daughter wept!

Yes! *she* might weep — but one stood nigh,
With horror in his tearless eye.
That eye which ne'er again shall close
In the deep quiet of repose;
No more on earth beholding aught,
Save one dread vision, stamp'd on thought.
But, lost in grief, the Orphan Maid
His deeper woe had scarce survey'd,
Till his wild voice reveal'd a tale,
Which seem'd to bid the Heavens turn pale!
He call'd her, "Sister!" and the word
In anguish breathed, in terror heard,
Reveal'd enough — all else were weak,
That sound a thousand pangs could speak.
He knelt beside that breathless clay,
Which, fix'd in utter stillness, lay —
Knelt till his soul imbibed each trace,
Each line of that unconscious face;
Knelt, till his eye could bear no more,
Those marble features to explore;
Then, starting, turning, as to shun
The image thus by Memory won,
A wild farewell to her he bade,
Who by the dead in silence pray'd,
And, frenzied by his bitter doom,
Fled thence — to find all earth a tomb!

Days pass'd away! — and Rhine's fair shore
In the light of summer smiled once more;
The vines were purpling on the hill,
And the corn-fields waved in the sunshine still:
There came a bark up the noble stream,
With pennons that shed a golden gleam,

With the flash of arms, and the voice of song,
Gliding triumphantly along;
For warrior-forms were glittering there,
Whose plumes waved light in the whispering air
And as the tones of oar and wave
Their measured cadence mingling gave,
'Twas thus th' exulting chorus rose,
While many an echo swell'd the close:—

From the fields where dead and dying,
On their battle-bier are lying,
Where the blood unstanch'd is gushing,
Where the steed uncheck'd is rushing,
Trampling o'er the noble-hearted,
Ere the spirit yet be parted;
Where each breath of Heaven is swaying
Knightly plumes and banners playing,
And the clarion's music swelling
Calls the vulture from his dwelling;
He comes, with trophies worthy of his line,
The son of heroes, Ulric of the Rhine!
To his own fair woods, enclosing
Vales in sunny peace reposing,
Where his native stream is laving
Banks, with golden harvests waving,
And the summer light is sleeping
On the grape, through tendrils peeping;
To the halls where harps are ringing,
Bards the praise of warriors singing,
Graceful footsteps bounding fleetly,
Joyous voices mingling sweetly;

Where the cheek of mirth is glowing,
And the wine-cup brightly flowing,
He comes, with trophies worthy of his line,
The son of heroes, Ulric of the Rhine.

He came—he sought his Ella's bowers,
He traversed Lindheim's lonely towers;
But voice and footstep thence had fled,
As from the dwellings of the dead,
And the sounds of human joy and woe
Gave place to the moan of the wave below.
The banner still the rampart crown'd,
But the tall rank grass waved thick around;
Still hung the arms of a race gone by,
In the blazon'd halls of their ancestry;
But they caught no more, at fall of night,
The wavering flash of the torch's light;
And they sent their echoes forth no more,
To the Minnesinger's (2) tuneful lore,
For the hands that touch'd the harp were gone,
And the hearts were cold that loved its tone;
And the soul of the chord lay mute and still,
Save when the wild wind bade it thrill,
And woke from its depths a dream-like moan,
For life, and power, and beauty gone.

The warrior turn'd from that silent scene,
Where a voice of woe had welcome been,
And his heart was heavy with boding thought,
As the forest-paths alone he sought.
He reach'd a convent's fane, that stood
Deep bosom'd in luxuriant wood;

Still, solemn, fair—it seem'd a spot
Where earthly care might be all forgot,
And sounds and dreams of Heaven alone,
To musing spirit might be known.

And sweet e'en then were the sounds that rose
On the holy and profound repose.
Oh! they came o'er the warrior's breast,
Like a glorious anthem of the blest;
And fear and sorrow died away,
Before the full, majestic lay.
He enter'd the secluded fane,
Which sent forth that inspiring strain;
He gazed—the hallow'd pile's array
Was that of some high festal day;
Wreaths of all hues its pillars bound,
Flowers of all scents were strew'd around;
The rose exhaled its fragrant sigh,
Blest on the altar to smile and die;
And a fragrant cloud from the censer's breath
Half hid the sacred pomp beneath;
And still the peal of choral song
Swell'd the resounding aisles along;
Wakening, in its triumphant flow,
Deep echoes from the graves below.

Why, from its woodland birthplace torn,
Doth summer's rose that scene adorn?
Why breathes the incense to the sky?
Why swells th'exulting harmony?
—And see'st thou not yon form, so light,
It seems half floating on the sight,

As if the whisper of a gale,
That did but wave its snowy veil,
Might bear it from the earth afar,
A lovely, but receding star?
Know, that devotion's shrine, e'en now,
Receives that youthful vestal's vow:
For this, high hymns, sweet odours rise,
A jubilee of sacrifice!
Mark yet a moment! from her brow
Yon priest shall lift the veil of snow,
Ere yet a darker mantle hide
The charms to Heaven thus sanctified;
Stay thee! and catch their parting gleam,
That ne'er shall fade from memory's dream.
A moment! oh! to Ulric's soul
Poised between hope and fear's control,
What slow, unmeasured hours went by,
Ere yet suspense grew certainty;
It came at length—once more that face
Reveal'd to man its mournful grace;
A sunbeam on its features fell,
As if to bear the world's farewell;
And doubt was o'er—his heart grew chill—
'Twas she—though changed—'twas Ella still!
Though now her once-rejoicing mien
Was deeply, mournfully serene;
Though clouds her eye's blue lustre shaded,
And the young cheek beneath had faded,
Well, well he knew the form, which cast
Light on his soul through all the past!
'Twas with him on the battle plain,
'Twas with him on the stormy main,

'T was in his visions, when the shield
Pillow'd his head on tented field;
'T was a bright beam that led him on
Where'er a triumph might be won,
In danger as in glory nigh,
An angel-guide to victory!

She caught his pale bewilder'd gaze
Of grief half lost in fix'd amaze—
Was it some vain illusion, wrought
By frenzy of impassion'd thought?
Some phantom, such as Grief hath power
To summon, in her wandering hour?
No! it was he! the lost, the mourn'd,
Too deeply loved, too late return'd!

A fever'd blush, a sudden start,
Spoke the last weakness of her heart:
'T was vanquish'd soon—the hectic red
A moment flush'd her cheek, and fled.
Once more serene—her steadfast eye
Look'd up as to Eternity;
Then gaz'd on Ulric with an air,
That said—the home of Love is *there!*

Yes! *there* alone it smiled for him,
Whose eye before that look grew dim;
Not long 't was his e'en *thus* to view
The beauty of its calm adieu;
Soon o'er those features, brightly pale,
Was cast th' impenetrable veil;
And, if one human sigh were given
By the pure bosom vow'd to Heaven,

'Twas lost, as many a murmur'd sound
Of grief, "not loud, but deep," is drown'd,
In hymns of joy, which proudly rise,
To tell the calm untroubled skies,
That earth hath banish'd care and woe,
And man holds festivals below!

NOTES.

Note 1.

The original of the scene here described is presented by the mountain called the Feldberg, in the Bergstrasse:—"Des masses énormes de rochers, entassées l'une sur l'autre depuis le sommet de la montagne, jusqu'à son pied, viennent y présenter un aspect superbe qu' aucune description ne saurait rendre. Ce furent, dit-on, des géans, qui en se livrant un combat du haut des montagnes, lancèrent les uns sur les autres ces énormes masses de rochers. On arrive, avec beau coup de peine, jusqu'au sommet du Feldberg, en suivant un sentier qui passe à côté de cette chaine de rochers. On entend continuellement un bruit sourd, qui parait venir d'un ruisseau au dessous des rochers; mais on a beau decendre, en se glissant à travers les ouvertures qui s'y trouvent, on ne decouvrira jamais le ruisseau. La colonne, dite Riesensäule, se trouve un peu plus haut qu'à la moitie de la montagne; c'est un bloc de granit taillé, d'une longueur de 30 pieds et d'un diamétre de 4 pieds. Il y a plus de probabilité de croire que les anciens Germains voulaient faire de ce bloc une colonne pour l'ériger en l'honneur de leur dieu Odin, que de préttendre, comme le fort plusieurs auteurs, que les Romains aient eu le dessein de la transporter dans leur capitale. On

voit un peu plus haut un autre bloc d'une forme presque carrée qu' on appelle Riesenaltar (autel du géant) qui, à en juger par sa grosseur et sa forme, était destiné à servir de piédestal à la colonne susdite." —— *Manuel pour les Voyageurs sur le Rhin.*

Note 2.

Minnesingers (bards of love), the appellation of the German minstrels in the Middle Ages.

SUPERSTITION AND REVELATION.

AN UNFINISHED POEM.

I.

Beings of brighter worlds! that rise at times
As phantoms, with ideal beauty fraught,
In those brief visions of celestial climes,
Which pass, like sunbeams, o'er the realms of thought,
Dwell ye around us?—are ye hovering nigh,
Throned on the cloud, or buoyant in the air?
And in deep solitudes, where human eye
Can trace no step, Immortals! are ye there?
Oh! who can tell?—what power, but Death alone,
Can lift the mystic veil that shades the world unknown?

II.

But Earth hath seen the days, ere yet the flowers
Of Eden wither'd, when reveal'd ye shone,
In all your brightness, 'midst those holy bowers—
Holy, but not unfading, as your own!
While He, the child of that primeval soil,
With you its paths in high communion trode,
His glory yet undimm'd by guilt or toil,
And beaming in the image of his God.
And his pure spirit glowing from the sky,
Exulting in its light, a spark of Deity.

III.

Then, haply, mortal and celestial lays,
Mingling their tones, from Nature's temple rose,
When nought but that majestic song of praise
Broke on the sanctity of night's repose,
With music since unheard: and man might trace,
By stream and vale, in deep embow'ring shade,
Devotion's first and loveliest dwelling-place,
The footsteps of th' Omnipotent, who made
That spot a shrine, where youthful nature cast
Her consecrated wealth, rejoicing as He pass'd.

IV.

Short were those days, and soon, O sons of Heaven!
Your aspect changed for man; in that dread hour,
When from his paradise the alien driven,
Beheld your forms in angry splendour tower,
Guarding the clime where he no more might dwell,
With meteor-swords: he saw the living flame,
And his first cry of misery was—"Farewell!"
His heart's first anguish, exile: he became
A pilgrim on the earth, whose children's lot
Is still for happier lands to pine—and reach them not.

V.

Where now the chosen bowers that once beheld
Delight and Love their first bright Sabbath keep?
From all its founts the worlds of waters swell'd,
And wrapt them in the mantle of the deep!
For He, to whom the elements are slaves,
In wrath unchain'd the oceans of the cloud,

And heaved the abyss beneath; till waves on waves
Folded creation in their mighty shroud,
Then left the earth a solitude, o'erspread
With its own awful wreck—a desert of the dead.

VI.

But onward flow'd life's busy course again,
And rolling ages with them bore away—
As to be lost amidst the boundless main,
Rich orient streams their golden sands convey—
The hallow'd lore of old—the guiding light
Left by tradition to the sons of earth,
And the blest memory of each sacred rite,
Known in the region of their father's birth,
When in each breeze around his fair abode
Whisper'd a seraph's voice, or lived the breath of God.

VII.

Who hath not seen, what time the orb of day,
Cinctured with glory, seeks the ocean's breast,
A thousand clouds, all glowing in his ray,
Catching brief splendour from the purple west?
So round thy parting steps, fair Truth! awhile
With borrow'd hues unnumber'd phantoms shone;
And Superstition, from thy lingering smile,
Caught a faint glow of beauty not her own,
Blending her rites with thine—while yet afar
Thine eye's last radiance beam'd, a slow-receding star.

VIII.

Yet still one stream was pure—one sever'd shrine
Was fed with holier fire, by chosen hands,

And sounds, and dreams, and impulses divine,
Were in the dwellings of the patriarch bands.
There still the father to his child bequeathed
The sacred torch of never-dying flame;
There still Devotion's suppliant accents breathed
The One adored and everlasting Name,
And angel guests would linger and repose
Where those primeval tents amid their palm-trees rose.

IX.

But far o'er earth the apostate wanderers bore
Their alien rites:—for them, by fount or shade,
Nor voice, nor vision, holy as of yore,
In thrilling whispers to the soul convey'd
High inspiration: yet in every clime,
Those sons of doubt and error fondly sought
With beings, in their essence more sublime,
To hold communion of mysterious thought;
On some dread power in trembling hope to lean,
And hear in every wind the accents of th' Unseen.

X.

Yes! we have need to bid our hopes repose
On some protecting influence; here confined,
Life hath no healing balm for mortal woes,
Earth is too narrow for th' immortal mind.
Our spirits burn to mingle with the day,
As exiles panting for their native coast,
Yet lured by every wild-flower from their way,
And shrinking from the gulf that must be cross'd;
Death hovers round us—in the zephyr's sigh,
As in the storm, he comes—and lo! Eternity!

XI.

As one left lonely on the desert sands
Of burning Afric, where, without a guide,
He gazes as the pathless waste expands—
Around, beyond, interminably wide;
While the red haze, presaging the Simoom,
Obscures the fierce resplendence of the sky,
Or suns of blasting light perchance illume
The glistening Serab[1] which illudes his eye;
Such was the wanderer Man, in ages flown,
Kneeling in doubt and fear before the dread Unknown

XII.

His thoughts explored the past—and where were they,
The chiefs of men, the mighty ones gone by?
He turn'd—a boundless void before him lay,
Wrapp'd in the shadows of futurity.
How knew the child of Nature that the flame
He felt within him, struggling to ascend,
Should perish not with that terrestrial frame
Doom'd with the earth on which it moved, to blend?
How, when affliction bade his spirit bleed,
If 't were a Father's love or Tyrant's wrath decreed?

XIII.

Oh! marvel not, if then he sought to trace
In all sublimities of sight and sound,
In rushing winds that wander through all space
Or 'midst deep woods, with holy gloom embrown'd,

[1] *Serab*, mirage.

The oracles of Fate! or if the train
Of floating forms, that throng the world of sleep,
And sounds that vibrate on the slumberer's brain
When mortal voices rest in stillness deep,
Were deem'd mysterious revelations, sent
From viewless powers, the lords of each dread element.

XIV.

Was not wild Nature, in that elder-time,
Clothed with a deeper power? — earth's wandering race,
Exploring realms of solitude sublime,
Not as *we* see, beheld her awful face!
Art had not tamed the mighty scenes which met
Their searching eyes; unpeopled kingdoms lay
In savage pomp before them — all was yet
Silent and vast, but not as in decay,
And the bright daystar, from his burning throne,
Look'd o'er a thousand shores, untrodden, voiceless, lone.

XV.

The forests in their dark luxuriance waved,
With all their swell of strange Æolian sound;
The fearful deep, sole region ne'er enslaved,
Heaved, in its pomp of terror, darkly round;
Then, brooding o'er the images, imprest
By forms of grandeur thronging on his eye,
And faint traditions, guarded in his breast,
'Midst dim remembrances of infancy,
Man shaped unearthly presences, in dreams,
Peopling each wilder haunt of mountains, groves, and streams.

XVI.

Then bled the victim—then in every shade
Of rock or turf arose the votive shrine;
Fear bow'd before the phantoms she portray'd,
And Nature teem'd with many a mystic sign.
Meteors, and storms, and thunders! ye whose course
E'en yet is awful to th' enlighten'd eye,
As, wildly rushing from your secret source,
Your sounding chariot sweeps the realms on high,
Then o'er the earth prophetic gloom ye cast,
And the wide nations gazed, and trembled as ye pass'd.

XVII.

But you, ye stars! in distant glory burning,
Nurtured with flame, bright altars of the sky!
To whose far climes the spirit, vainly turning,
Would pierce the secrets of infinity—
To you the heart, bereft of other light,
Its first deep homage paid, on Eastern plains,
Where Day hath terrors, but majestic Night,
Calm in her pomp, magnificently reigns,
Cloudless and silent, circled with the race
Of some unnumber'd orbs, that light the depths of space.

XVIII.

Shine on! and brightly plead for erring thought,
Whose wing, unaided in its course, explored
The wide creation, and beholding nought
Like your eternal beauty, then adored
Its living splendours; deeming them inform'd
By natures temper'd with a holier fire—

Pure beings, with ethereal effluence warm'd,
Who to the source of spirit might aspire,
And mortal prayers benignantly convey
To some presiding Power, more awful far than they.

XIX.

Guides o'er the desert and the deep! to you
The seaman turn'd, rejoicing at the helm,
When from the regions of empyreal blue
Ye pour'd soft radiance o'er the ocean-realm;
To you the dweller of the plains address'd
Vain prayers, that called the clouds and dews your own;
To you the shepherd, on the mountain's crest,
Kindled the fires that far through midnight shone,
As earth would light up all her hills, to vie
With your immortal host, and image back the sky.

XX.

Hail to the queen of heaven! her silvery crown
Serenely wearing, o'er her high domain
She walks in brightness, looking cloudless down,
As if to smile on her terrestrial reign.
Earth should be hush'd in slumber—but the night
Calls forth her worshippers; the feast is spread,
On hoary Lebanon's umbrageous height
The shrine is raised, the rich libation shed
To her, whose beams illume those cedar-shades
Faintly as Nature's light the 'wilder'd soul pervades.

XXI.

But when *thine* orb, all earth's rich hues restoring,
Came forth, O sun! in majesty supreme,
Still from thy pure exhaustless fountain, pouring
Beauty and life in each triumphant beam,
Through thine own east what joyous rites prevail'd!
What choral songs re-echo'd! while thy fire
Shone o'er its thousand altars, and exhaled
The precious incense of each odorous pyre,
Heap'd with the richest balms of spicy vales,
And aromatic woods that scent the Arabian gales.

XXII.

Yet not with Saba's fragrant wealth alone,
Balsam and myrrh, the votive pile was strew'd;
For the dark children of the burning zone
Drew frenzy from thy fervours, and bedew'd
With their own blood thy shrine; while that wild scene,
Haply with pitying eye, thine angel view'd,
And, though with glory mantled, and serene
In his own fulness of beatitude,
Yet mourn'd for those whose spirits from thy ray
Caught not one transient spark of intellectual day.

XXIII.

But earth had deeper stains: ethereal powers!
Benignant seraphs! wont to leave the skies,
And hold high converse, 'midst his native bowers,
With the once glorious son of Paradise,
Look'd ye from heaven in sadness? were your strains
Of choral praise suspended in dismay,

When the polluted shrine of Syria's plains,
With clouds of incense dimm'd the blaze of day?
Or did ye veil indignantly your eyes,
While demons hail'd the pomp of human sacrifice?

XXIV.

And well the powers of evil might rejoice,
When rose from Tophet's vale the exulting cry,
And, deaf to Nature's supplicating voice,
The frantic mother bore her child to die!
Around her vainly clung his feeble hands
With sacred instinct: love hath lost its sway,
While ruthless zeal the sacrifice demands,
And the fires blaze, impatient for their prey.
Let not his shrieks reveal the dreadful tale!
Well may the drum's loud peal o'erpower an infant's wail!

XXV.

A voice of sorrow! not from thence it rose;
'Twas not the childless mother—Syrian maids,
Where with red wave the mountain streamlet flows,
Keep tearful vigil in their native shades.
With dirge and plaint the cedar-groves resound,
Each rock's deep echo for Adonis mourns:
Weep for the dead!—away! the lost is found,
To life and love the buried god returns!
Then wakes the timbrel—then the forests ring,
And shouts of frenzied joy are on each breeze's wing!

XXVI.

But fill'd with holier joy the Persian stood,
In silent reverence, on the mountain's brow,

At early dayspring, while the expanding flood
Of radiance burst around, above, below—
Bright, boundless as eternity; he gazed
Till his full soul, imbibing heaven, o'erflow'd
In worship of th' Invisible, and praised
In thee, O Sun! the symbol and abode
Of life, and power, and excellence, the throne
Where dwelt the Unapproach'd, resplendently alone.[1]

XXVII.

What if his thoughts, with erring fondness, gave
Mysterious sanctity to things which wear
Th' Eternal's impress?—if the living wave,
The circling heavens, the free and boundless air—
If the pure founts of everlasting flame,
Deep in his country's hallow'd vales enshrined,
And the bright stars, maintain'd a silent claim
To love and homage from his awe-struck mind?
Still with his spirit dwelt a lofty dream
Of uncreated Power, far, far o'er these supreme.

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[1] At an earlier stage in the composition of this poem, the following stanza was here inserted:—

'Nor rose the Magian's hymn, sublimely swelling
In full-toned homage to the source of flame,
From fabric rear'd by man—the gorgeous dwelling
Of such bright idol-forms as art could frame;
He rear'd no temple, bade no walls contain
The breath of incense, or the voice of prayer;
But made the boundless universe his fane,
The rocks his altar-stone, adoring there
The Being whose Omnipotence pervades
All deserts and all depths, and hallows loneliest shades.'

XXVIII.

And with that faith was conquest. He whose name
To Judah's harp of prophecy had rung;
He, of whose yet unborn and distant fame
The mighty voice of Inspiration sung,
He came, the victor Cyrus!—as he pass'd,
Thrones to his footstep rock'd, and monarchs lay
Suppliant and clothed with dust; while nations cast
Their ancient idols down before *his* way,
Who, in majestic march, from shore to shore,
The quenchless flame revered by Persia's children bore.

* * * * * * * *

THE CARAVAN IN THE DESERTS.

Call it not loneliness, to dwell
In woodland shade or hermit dell,
Or the deep forest to explore,
Or wander alpine regions o'er;
For Nature there all joyous reigns,
And fills with life her wild domains.
A bird's light wing may break the air,
A wave, a leaf, may murmur there:
A bee the mountain flowers may seek,
A chamois bound from peak to peak;
An eagle, rushing to the sky,
Wake the deep echoes with his cry;
And still some sound, thy heart to cheer,
Some voice, though not of man, is near.
But he, whose weary step hath traced
Mysterious Afric's awful waste—
Whose eye Arabia's wilds hath view'd
Can tell thee what is solitude?
It is, to traverse lifeless plains,
Where everlasting stillness reigns,
And billowy sands and dazzling sky,
Seem boundless as infinity!
It is, to sink, with speechless dread,
In scenes unmeet for mortal tread,
Sever'd from earthly being's trace,
Alone, amidst eternal space!

'T is noon—and fearfully profound,
Silence is on the desert round;
Alone she reigns, above, beneath,
With all the attributes of death!
No bird the blazing heaven may dare,
No insect bide the scorching air;
The ostrich, though of sun-born race,
Seeks a more shelter'd dwelling-place;
The lion slumbers in his lair,
The serpent shuns the noontide glare:
But slowly wind the patient train
Of camels o'er the blasted plain,
Where they and man may brave alone
The terrors of the burning zone.

Faint not, O pilgrims! though on high,
As a volcano, flame the sky;
Shrink not, though as a furnace glow
The dark-red seas of sand below;
Though not a shadow, save your own,
Across the dread expanse is thrown;
Mark! where, your feverish lips to lave,
Wide spreads the fresh transparent wave!
Urge your tired camels on, and take
Your rest beside yon glistening lake;
Thence, haply, cooler gales may spring,
And fan your brows with lighter wing.
Lo! nearer now, its glassy tide
Reflects the date-tree on its side—
Speed on! pure draughts and genial air,
And verdant shade, await you there.

Oh glimpse of Heaven! to him unknown,
That hath not trod the burning zone!
Forward they press—they gaze dismay'd—
The waters of the desert fade!
Melting to vapours that elude
The eye, the lip, they vainly woo'd.[1]
What meteor comes?—a purple haze
Hath half obscured the noontide rays:[2]
Onward it moves in swift career,
A blush upon the atmosphere;
Haste, haste! avert th' impending doom,
Fall prostrate! 'tis the dread Simoom!
Bow down your faces—till the blast
On its red wing of flame hath pass'd,
Far bearing o'er the sandy wave
The viewless Angel of the Grave.

It came—'tis vanish'd—but hath left
The wanderers e'en of hope bereft;
The ardent heart, the vigorous frame,
Pride, courage, strength, its power could tame;
Faint with despondence, worn with toil,
They sink upon the burning soil,
Resign'd, amidst those realms of gloom,
To find their death-bed and their tomb.[3]

But onward still!—yon distant spot
Of verdure can deceive you not;

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[1] The mirage, or vapour assuming the appearance of water.

[2] See the description of the Simoom in Bruce's Travels.

[3] The extreme languor and despondence produced by the Simoom, even when its effects are not fatal have been described by many travellers.

Yon palms, which tremulously seem'd
Reflected as the waters gleam'd,
Along th' horizon's verge display'd,
Still rear their slender colonnade—
A landmark, guiding o'er the plain
The Caravan's exhausted train.
Fair is that little Isle of Bliss
The desert's emerald oasis!
A rainbow on the torrent's wave,
A gem embosom'd in the grave,
A sunbeam on a stormy day
Its beauty's image might convey!
'Beauty, in horror's lap that sleeps,'
While silence round her vigil keeps.
—Rest, weary pilgrims! calmly laid
To slumber in th' acacia shade:
Rest, where the shrubs your camels bruise,
Their aromatic breath diffuse;
Where softer light the sunbeams pour
Through the tall palm and sycamore;
And the rich date luxuriant spreads
Its pendent clusters o'er your heads.
Nature once more, to seal your eyes,
Murmurs her sweetest lullabies;
Again each heart the music hails
Of rustling leaves and sighing gales,
And oh! to Afric's child how dear
The voice of fountains gushing near!
Sweet be your slumbers! and your dreams
Of waving groves and rippling streams!
Far be the serpent's venom'd coil
From the brief respite won by toil;

Far be the awful shades of those
Who deep beneath the sands repose—
The hosts, to whom the desert's breath
Bore swift and stern the call of death.
Sleep! nor may scorching blast invade
The freshness of the acacia shade,
But gales of heaven your spirits bless,
With life's best balm—Forgetfulness!
Till night from many an urn diffuse
The treasures of her world of dews.

The day hath closed—the moon on high
Walks in her cloudless majesty.
A thousand stars to Afric's heaven
Serene magnificence have given;
Pure beacons of the sky, whose flame
Shines forth eternally the same.
Blest be their beams, whose holy light
Shall guide the camel's footsteps right,
And lead, as with a track divine,
The pilgrim to his prophet's shrine!
—Rise! bid your Isle of Palms adieu!
Again your lonely march pursue,
While airs of night are freshly blowing,
And heavens with softer beauty glowing.
—'Tis silence all; the solemn scene
Wears, at each step, a ruder mien;
For giant-rocks, at distance piled,
Cast their deep shadows o'er the wild.
Darkly they rise—what eye hath view'd
The caverns of their solitude?

Away! within those awful cells
The savage lord of Afric dwells!
Heard ye his voice?—the lion's roar
Swells as when billows break on shore.
Well may the camel shake with fear,
And the steed pant—his foe is near;
Haste! light the torch, bid watch-fires throw
Far o'er the waste, a ruddy glow;
Keep vigil—guard the bright array
Of flames that scare him from his prey;
Within their magic circle press,
O wanderers of the wilderness!
Heap high the pile, and by its blaze,
Tell the wild tales of elder days.
Arabia's wond'rous lore—that dwells
On warrior deeds, and wizard spells;
Enchanted domes, 'mid scenes like these,
Rising to vanish with the breeze;
Gardens, whose fruits are gems, that shed
Their light where mortal may not tread,
And spirits, o'er whose pearly halls
Th' eternal billow heaves and falls.
—With charms like these, of mystic power,
Watchers! beguile the midnight hour.
—Slowly that hour hath roll'd away,
And star by star withdraws its ray.
Dark children of the sun! again
Your own rich orient hails his reign.
He comes, but veil'd—with sanguine glare
Tinging the mists that load the air;
Sounds of dismay, and signs of flame,
Th' approaching hurricane proclaim.

'Tis death's red banner streams on high—
Fly to the rocks for shelter!—fly!
Lo! dark'ning o'er the fiery skies,
The pillars of the desert rise!
On, in terrific grandeur wheeling,
A giant-host, the heavens concealing,
They move, like mighty genii forms,
Towering immense 'midst clouds and storms.
Who shall escape?—with awful force
The whirlwind bears them on their course,
They join, they rush resistless on,
The landmarks of the plain are gone;
The steps, the forms, from earth effaced,
Of those who trod the burning waste!
All whelm'd, all hush'd!—none left to bear
Sad record how they perish'd there!
No stone their tale of death shall tell—
The desert guards its mysteries well;
And o'er th' unfathom'd sandy deep,
Where low their nameless relics sleep,
Oft shall the future pilgrim tread,
Nor know his steps are on the dead.

MARIUS AMONGST THE RUINS OF CARTHAGE.

["Marius, during the time of his exile, seeking refuge in Africa, had landed at Carthage, when an officer, sent by the Roman governor of Africa, came and thus addressed him:—"Marius, I come from the Prætor Sextilius, to tell you that he forbids you to set foot in Africa. If you obey not, he will support the Senate's decree, and treat you as a public enemy." Marius, upon hearing this, was struck dumb with grief and indignation. He uttered not a word for some time, but regarded the officer with a menacing aspect. At length the officer enquired what answer he should carry to the governor. "Go and tell him," said the unfortunate man, with a sigh, "that thou hast seen the exiled Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage."—See PLUTARCH.]

'T was noon, and Afric's dazzling sun on high,
With fierce resplendence fill'd th' unclouded sky;
No zephyr waved the palm's majestic head,
And smooth alike the seas and deserts spread;
While desolate, beneath a blaze of light,
Silent and lonely as at dead of night,
The wreck of Carthage lay. Her prostrate fanes
Had strew'd their precious marble o'er the plains;
Dark weeds and grass the column had o'ergrown,
The lizard bask'd upon the altar-stone;
Whelm'd by the ruins of their own abodes,
Had sunk the forms of heroes and of gods;

While near, dread offspring of the burning day!
Coil'd 'midst forsaken halls, the serpent lay.

There came an exile, long by fate pursued,
To shelter in that awful solitude.
Well did that wanderer's high yet faded mien,
Suit the sad grandeur of the desert-scene;
Shadow'd, not veil'd, by locks of wintry snow,
Pride sat, still mighty, on his furrow'd brow;
Time had not quench'd the terrors of his eye,
Nor tamed his glance of fierce ascendency;
While the deep meaning of his features told,
Ages of thought had o'er his spirit roll'd,
Nor dimm'd the fire that might not be controll'd;
And still did power invest his stately form,
Shatter'd, but yet unconquer'd, by the storm.

But slow his step—and where, not yet o'erthrown,
Still tower'd a pillar 'midst the waste alone,
Faint with long toil, his weary limbs he laid,
To slumber in its solitary shade.
He slept—and darkly, on his brief repose,
Th' indignant genius of the scene arose.
Clouds robed his dim unearthly form, and spread
Mysterious gloom around his crownless head,
Crownless, but regal still. With stern disdain,
The kingly shadow seem'd to lift his chain,
Gazed on the palm, his ancient sceptre torn,
And his eye kindled with immortal scorn!

"And sleep'st thou, Roman?" cried his voice austere;
"Shall son of Latium find a refuge *here?*

Awake! arise! to speed the hour of Fate,
When Rome shall fall, as Carthage desolate!
Go! with her children's flower, the free, the brave,
People the silent chambers of the grave;
So shall the course of ages yet to be,
More swiftly waft the day, avenging me!

"Yes, from the awful gulf of years to come,
I hear a voice that prophesies her doom;
I see the trophies of her pride decay,
And her long line of triumphs pass away,
Lost in the depths of time — while sinks the star
That led her march of heroes from afar!
Lo! from the frozen forests of the north,
The sons of slaughter pour in myriads forth!
Who shall awake the mighty? — will thy woe,
City of thrones! disturb the realms below?
Call on the dead to hear thee! let thy cries
Summon their shadowy legions to arise,
Array the ghosts of conquerors on thy walls!
— Barbarians revel in their ancient halls,
And their lost children bend the subject knee,
'Midst the proud tombs and trophies of the free.
Bird of the sun! dread eagle! born on high,
A creature of the empyreal — Thou, whose eye
Was lightning to the earth — whose pinion waved
In haughty triumph o'er a world enslaved;
Sink from thy Heavens! for glory's noon is o'er,
And rushing storms shall bear thee on no more!
Closed is thy regal course — thy crest is torn,
And thy plume banish'd from the realms of morn.

The shaft hath reach'd thee! — rest with chiefs and
kings,
Who conquer'd in the shadow of thy wings;
Sleep! while thy foes exult around their prey,
And share thy glorious heritage of day!
"But darker years shall mingle with the past,
And deeper vengeance shall be mine at last.
O'er the seven hills I see destruction spread,
And Empire's widow veils with dust her head!
Her gods forsake each desolated shrine,
Her temples moulder to the earth, like mine:
'Midst fallen palaces she sits alone,
Calling heroic shades from ages gone,
Or bids the nations 'midst her deserts wait
To learn the fearful oracles of Fate!

"Still sleep'st thou, Roman? Son of Victory,
rise!
Wake to obey th' avenging Destinies!
Shed by thy mandate, soon thy country's blood
Shall swell and darken Tiber's yellow flood!
My children's manès call — awake! prepare
The feast they claim! — exult in Rome's despair!
Be thine ear closed against her suppliant cries,
Bid thy soul triumph in her agonies;
Let carnage revel, e'en her shrines among,
Spare not the valiant, pity not the young!

Haste! o'er her hills the sword's libation shed,
And wreak the curse of Carthage on her head!"
The vision flies — a mortal step is near,
Whose echoes vibrate on the slumberer's ear;

He starts, he wakes to woe—before him stands
Th' unwelcome messenger of harsh commands,
Whose falt'ring accents tell the exiled chief,
To seek on other shores a home for grief.
—Silent the wanderer sat—but on his cheek
The burning glow far more than words might speak;
And, from the kindling of his eye, there broke
Language, where all th' indignant soul awoke,
Till his deep thought found voice—then, calmly stern,
And sovereign in despair, he cried, "Return!
Tell him who sent thee hither, thou hast seen
Marius, the exile, rest where Carthage once hath been!"

SONG.

FOUNDED ON AN ARABIAN ANECDOTE.

Away! though still thy sword is red
With life-blood from my sire,
No drop of thine may now be shed
To quench my bosom's fire;
Though on my heart 'twould fall more blest,
Than dews upon the desert's breast.

I've sought thee 'midst the sons of men,
Through the wide city's fanes;
I've sought thee by the lion's den,
O'er pathless, boundless plains;
No step that mark'd the burning waste,
But mine its lonely course hath traced.

Thy name hath been a baleful spell,
O'er my dark spirit cast;
No thought may dream, no words may tell,
What there unseen hath pass'd:
This wither'd cheek, this faded eye,
Are seals of thee—behold! and fly!

Hath not my cup for thee been pour'd,
Beneath the palm-tree's shade?
Hath not soft sleep thy frame restored,
Within my dwelling laid?
What though unknown—yet who shall rest
Secure—if not the Arab's guest?

Haste thee! and leave my threshold-floor,
  Inviolate and pure!
Let not thy presence tempt me more,
  —Man may not thus endure!
Away! I bear a fetter'd arm,
A heart that burns—but must not harm!

Begone! outstrip the swift gazelle!
  The wind in speed subdue!
Fear cannot fly so swift, so well,
  As vengeance shall pursue;
And hate, like love, in parting pain,
Smiles o'er *one* hope—we meet again!

To-morrow—and th' avenger's hand,
  The warrior's dart is free!
E'en now, no spot in all thy land,
  Save *this*, had shelter'd thee.
Let blood the monarch's hall profane,—
The Arab's tent must bear no stain!

Fly! may the desert's fiery blast
  Avoid thy secret way!
And sternly, till thy steps be past,
  Its whirlwinds sleep to-day!
I would not that thy doom should be
Assign'd by Heaven to aught but me.

ALP-HORN SONG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF TIECK.

What dost thou here, brave Swiss?
Forgett'st thou thus thy native clime—
The lovely land of thy bright spring-time?
The land of thy home, with its free delights,
And fresh green valleys and mountain-heights?
Can the stranger's yield thee bliss?

What welcome cheers thee now?
Dar'st thou lift thine eye to gaze around?
Where are the peaks, with their snow-wreaths crown'd?
Where is the song, on the wild winds borne,
Or the ringing peal of the joyous horn,
Or the peasant's fearless brow?

But thy spirit is far away!
Where a greeting waits thee in kindred eyes,
Where the white Alps look through the sunny skies,
With the low senn-cabins, and pastures free,
And the sparkling blue of the glacier-sea,
And the summits, clothed with day!

Back, noble child of Tell!
Back to the wild and the silent glen,
And the frugal board of peasant-men!
Dost thou seek the friend, the loved one, here?—
Away! not a true Swiss heart is near,
Against thine own to swell!

TRANSLATIONS FROM HORACE.

TO VENUS.

BOOK 1ST, ODE 30TH.

"O Venus, Regina Cnidi Paphique," &c.

Oh! leave thine own loved isle,
Bright queen of Cyprus and the Paphian shores!
And here in Glycera's fair temple smile,
Where vows and incense lavishly she pours.

Waft here thy glowing son;
Bring Hermes; let the Nymphs thy path surround,
And youth unlovely till thy gifts be won,
And the light Graces with the zone unbound.

TO HIS ATTENDANT.

BOOK 1ST, ODE 38TH.

"Persicos odi, puer, apparatus," &c.

I HATE the Persian's costly pride—
The wreaths with bands of linden tied—
These, boy, delight me not;
Nor where the lingering roses bide,
Seek thou for me the spot.

For me be nought but myrtle twined—
The modest myrtle, sweet to bind
Alike thy brows and mine;
While thus I quaff the bowl, reclined
Beneath th' o'erarching vine.

TO DELIUS.

BOOK 2D, ODE 3D.

"Æquam memento rebus in arduis," &c.

FIRM be thy soul!—serene in power,
When adverse fortune clouds the sky;
Undazzled by the triumph's hour,
Since, Delius, thou must die!

Alike, if still to grief resign'd,
Or if, through festal days, 'tis thine
To quaff, in grassy haunts reclined,
The old Falernian wine:

Haunts where the silvery poplar-boughs
Love with the pine's to blend on high,
And some clear fountain brightly flows
In graceful windings by.

There be the rose with beauty fraught,
So soon to fade, so brilliant now,
There be the wine, the odours brought,
While time and fate allow!

For thou, resigning to thine heir
Thy halls, thy bowers, thy treasured store,
Must leave that home, those woodlands fair,
On yellow Tiber's shore.

What then avails it if thou trace
From Inachus thy glorious line?
Or, sprung from some ignoble race,
If not a roof be thine?

Since the dread lot for all must leap
Forth from the dark revolving urn
And we must tempt the gloomy deep,
Whence exiles ne'er return.

TO THE FOUNTAIN OF BANDUSIA.

BOOK 3D, ODE 13TH.

"Oh! Fons Bandusiæ, splendidior vitro," &c.

Oh! worthy fragrant gifts of flowers and wine,
Bandusian fount, than crystal far more bright!
To-morrow shall a sportive kid be thine,
Whose forehead swells with horns of infant might:
Ev'n now of love and war he dreams in vain,
Doom'd with his blood thy gelid wave to stain.

Let the red dog-star burn!—his scorching beam,
Fierce in resplendence, shall molest not thee!
Still shelter'd from his rays, thy banks, fair stream,
To the wild flock around thee wandering free,
And the tired oxen from the furrow'd field
The genial freshness of their breath shall yield.

And thou, bright fount! ennobled and renown'd
Shalt by thy poet's votive song be made;
Thou and the oak with deathless verdure crown'd,
Whose boughs, a pendent canopy, o'ershade
Those hollow rocks, whence, murmuring many a tale,
Thy chiming waters pour upon the vale.

TO FAUNUS.

BOOK 3D, ODE 18TH.

"Faune, Nympharum fugentium amator," &c.

FAUNUS, who lov'st the flying nymphs to chase,
O let thy steps with genial influence tread
My sunny fields, and be thy fostering grace,
Soft on my nursling groves and borders, shed.

If, at the mellow closing of the year,
A tender kid in sacrifice be thine;
Nor fail the liberal bowls to Venus dear;
Nor clouds of incense to thine antique shrine.

Joyous each flock in meadow herbage plays,
When the December feast returns to thee;
Calmly the ox along the pasture strays,
With festal villagers from toil set free.

Then from the wolf no more the lambs retreat,
Then shower the woods to thee their foliage round;
And the glad labourer triumphs that his feet
In triple dance have struck the hated ground.

THE CROSS OF THE SOUTH.

[The beautiful constellation of the Cross is seen only in the southern hemisphere. The following lines are supposed to be addressed to it by a Spanish traveller in South America.]

In the silence and grandeur of midnight I tread,
Where savannahs, in boundless magnificence, spread,
And bearing sublimely their snow-wreaths on high,
The far Cordilleras unite with the sky.

The fir-tree waves o'er me, the fire-flies' red light
With its quick-glancing splendour illumines the night;
And I read in each tint of the skies and the earth,
How distant my steps from the land of my birth.

But to thee, as thy lode-stars resplendently burn
In their clear depths of blue, with devotion I turn,
Bright Cross of the South! and beholding thee shine,
Scarce regret the loved land of the olive and vine.

Thou recallest the ages when first o'er the main
My fathers unfolded the ensign of Spain,
And planted their faith in the regions that see
Its unperishing symbol emblazon'd in thee.

How oft in their course o'er the oceans unknown,
Where all was mysterious, and awful, and lone,
Hath their spirit been cheer'd by thy light, when the deep
Reflected its brilliance in tremulous sleep!

As the vision that rose to the Lord of the world,[1]
When first his bright banner of faith was unfurl'd;
Even such, to the heroes of Spain, when their prow
Made the billows the path of their glory, wert thou

And to me, as I traversed the world of the west,
Through deserts of beauty in stillness that rest;
By forests and rivers untamed in their pride,
Thy hues have a language, thy course is a guide.

Shine on — my own land is a far-distant spot,
And the stars of thy sphere can enlighten it not;
And the eyes that I love, though e'en now they may be
O'er the firmament wandering, can gaze not on thee!

But thou to my thoughts art a pure-blazing shrine,
A fount of bright hopes, and of visions divine;
And my soul, as an eagle exulting and free,
Soars high o'er the Andes to mingle with thee.

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[1] Constantine.

THE SLEEPER OF MARATHON.

I LAY upon the solemn plain,
And by the funeral mound,
Where those who died not there in vain
Their place of sleep had found.

'T was silent where the free blood gush'd
When Persia came array'd—
So many a voice had there been hush'd,
So many a footstep stay'd.

I slumber'd on the lonely spot
So sanctified by death:
I slumber'd—but my rest was not
As theirs who lay beneath.

For on my dreams, that shadowy hour,
They rose—the chainless dead—
All arm'd they sprang, in joy, in power
Up from their grassy bed.

I saw their spears, on that red field,
Flash as in time gone by—
Chased to the seas without his shield,
I saw the Persian fly.

I woke—the sudden trumpet's blast
Call'd to another fight—
From visions of our glorious past,
Who doth not wake in might?

TO MISS F. A. L. ON HER BIRTHDAY.

What wish can Friendship form for thee,
What brighter star invoke to shine?—
Thy path from every thorn is free,
And every rose is thine!

Life hath no purer joy in store,
Time hath no sorrow to efface;
Hope cannot paint one blessing more
Than memory can retrace!

Some hearts a boding fear might own,
Had Fate to *them* thy portion given,
Since many an eye by tears alone,
Is taught to gaze on Heaven!

And there are virtues oft conceal'd,
Till roused by anguish from repose,
As odorous trees no balm will yield,
Till from their wounds it flows.

But fear not *thou* the lesson fraught
With Sorrow's chast'ning power to know;
Thou need'st not thus be sternly taught,
"To melt at others' woe."

Then still, with heart as blest, as warm,
Rejoice thou in thy lot on earth:
Ah! why should Virtue dread the *storm*,
If *sunbeams* prove her worth?

WRITTEN IN THE FIRST LEAF OF THE ALBUM OF THE SAME.

What first should consecrate as thine,
The volume, destined to be fraught
With many a sweet and playful line,
With many a pure and pious thought?

It should be, what a loftier strain
Perchance less meetly would impart;
What never yet was pour'd in vain,—
The blessing of a grateful heart—

For kindness, which hath soothed the hour
Of anxious grief, of weary pain,
And oft, with its beguiling power,
Taught languid Hope to smile again;

Long shall that fervent blessing rest
On thee and thine, and, heavenwards borne,
Call down such peace to soothe *thy* breast,
As *thou* would'st bear to all that mourn.

TO THE SAME—ON THE DEATH OF HER MOTHER.

Say not 'tis fruitless, nature's holy tear,
Shed by affection o'er a parent's bier!
More blest than dew on Hermon's brow that falls
Each drop to life some latent virtue calls;

Awakes some purer hope, ordain'd to rise,
By earthly sorrow strengthen'd for the skies,
Till the sad heart, whose pangs exalt its love,
With its lost treasure, seeks a home—above.

But grief will claim her hour,—and He, whose eye
Looks pitying down on nature's agony,
He, in whose love the righteous calmly sleep,
Who bids us hope, forbids us not to weep!
He, too, hath wept—and sacred be the woes
Once borne by him, their inmost source who knows,
Searches each wound, and bids His Spirit bring
Celestial healing on its dove-like wing!

And who but He shall soothe, when one dread stroke,
Ties, that were fibres of the soul, hath broke?
Oh! well may those, yet lingering here, deplore
The vanish'd light, that cheers their path no more!
Th' Almighty hand, which many a blessing dealt,
Sends its keen arrows not to be unfelt!
By fire and storm, Heaven tries the Christian's worth,
And joy departs, to wean us from the earth,
Where still too long, with beings born to die,
Time hath dominion o'er Eternity.

Yet not the less, o'er all the heart hath lost,
Shall Faith rejoice, when Nature grieves the most;
Then comes her triumph! through the shadowy gloom,
Her star in glory rises from the tomb,
Mounts to the day-spring, leaves the cloud below,
And gilds the tears that cease not yet to flow!

Yes, all is o'er! fear, doubt, suspense are fled,
Let brighter thoughts be with the virtuous dead!
The final ordeal of the soul is past,
And the pale brow is seal'd to Heaven at last![1]

And thou, loved spirit! for the skies mature,
Steadfast in faith, in meek devotion pure;
Thou that didst make the home thy presence blest
Bright with the sunshine of thy gentle breast,
Where peace a holy dwelling-place had found,
Whence beam'd her smile benignantly around;
Thou, that to bosoms widow'd and bereft
Dear, precious records of thy worth hast left,
The treasured gem of sorrowing hearts to be,
Till Heaven recall surviving love to thee!—

O cherish'd and revered! fond memory well
On thee, with sacred, sad delight, may dwell!
So pure, so blest thy life, that death alone
Could make more perfect happiness thine own;
He came—thy cup of joy, serenely bright,
Full to the last, still flow'd in cloudless light;
He came—an angel, bearing from on high
The all it wanted—Immortality!

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[1] "Till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads."—*Revelations.*

FROM THE ITALIAN OF GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA.

Divine Eliza!—since the sapphire sky
Thou measur'st now on angel wings, and feet
Sandall'd with immortality—oh why
Of me forgetful!—Wherefore not entreat
To hurry on the time when I shall see
The veil of mortal being rent in twain,
And smile that I am free?

In the third circle of that happy land
Shall we not seek together, hand in hand,
Another lovelier landscape, a new plain,
Other romantic streams and mountains blue,
And other vales, and a new shady shore,
When I may rest, and ever in my view
Keep thee, without the terror and surprise
Of being sunder'd more!

FROM THE ITALIAN OF SANNAZARO.

Oh! pure and blessed soul
That, from thy clay's control
Escaped, hast sought and found thy native sphere,
And from thy crystal throne
Look'st down, with smiles alone,
On this vain scene of mortal hope and fear;

Thy happy feet have trod
The starry spangled road,
Celestial flocks by field and fountain guiding,
And from their erring track
Thou charm'st thy shepherds back,
With the soft music of thy gentle chiding.

O! who shall Death withstand—
Death, whose impartial hand
Levels the lowest plant and loftiest pine!
When shall our ears again
Drink in so sweet a strain,
Our eyes behold so fair a form as thine!

APPEARANCE OF THE SPIRIT OF THE CAPE TO VASCA DE GAMA.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE FIFTH BOOK OF THE LUSIAD OF CAMOENS.)

Propitious winds our daring bark impell'd,
O'er seas which mortal ne'er till then beheld,
When as one eve, devoid of care, we stood
Watching the prow glide swiftly through the flood,
High o'er our heads arose a cloud so vast,
O'er sea and heaven a fearful shade it cast:
Awful, immense, it came! so thick, so drear,
Its gloomy grandeur chill'd our hearts with fear,
And the dark billow heaved with distant roar,
Hoarse, as if bursting on some rocky shore.

Thrill'd with amaze, I cried, "Supernal Power!
What mean the omens of this threatening hour?
What the dread mystery of this ocean-clime,
So darkly grand, so fearfully sublime?"
Scarce had I spoke, when, lo! a mighty form
Tower'd through the gathering shadows of the storm;
Of rude proportions and gigantic size,
Dark features, rugged beard, and deep-sunk eyes;
Fierce was his gesture, and his tresses flew,
Sable his lips, and earthly pale his hue.
Well may I tell thee, that his limbs and height,
In vast dimensions and stupendous might,
Surpass'd that wonder, once the sculptor's boast,
The proud Colossus of the Rhodian coast.
Deep was his voice, in hollow tones he spoke,
As if from ocean's inmost caves they broke;
And but that form to view, that voice to hear,
Spread o'er our flesh and hair cold deadly thrills of fear.

"Oh! daring band," he cried, "far, far more bold
Than all whose deeds recording fame has told;
Adventurous spirits! whom no bounds of fear
Can teach one pause in rapine's fierce career;
Since, bursting thus the barriers of the main,
Ye dare to violate my lonely reign,
Where, till this moment, from the birth of time,
No sail e'er broke the solitude sublime:
Since thus ye pierce the veil by Nature thrown
O'er the dark secrets of the deep Unknown,
Ne'er yet reveal'd to aught of mortal birth,
Howe'er supreme in power, unmatch'd in worth;
Hear from my lips what chastisements of fate,
Rash, bold intruders! on your course await!

What countless perils, woes of darkest hue,
Haunt the vast main and shores your arms must yet subdue!

Know that o'er every bark, whose fearless helm
Invades, like yours, this wide mysterious realm,
Unmeasured ills my arm in wrath shall pour,
And guard with storms my own terrific shore!
And on the fleet, which first presumes to brave
The dangers throned on this tempestuous wave,
Shall vengeance burst, ere yet a warning fear
Have time to prophesy destruction near!

"Yes, desperate band! if right my hopes divine
Revenge, fierce, full, unequall'd, shall be mine!
Urge your bold prow, pursue your venturous way,
Pain, Havoc, Ruin, wait their destined prey!
And your proud vessels, year by year, shall find,
(If no false dreams delude my prescient mind),
My wrath so dread in many a fatal storm,
Death shall be deem'd misfortune's mildest form.

* * * * * * *

"Lo! where my victim comes!—of noble birth,
Of cultured genius, and exalted worth,
With her,[1] his best beloved, in all her charms,
Pride of his heart, and treasure of his arms!
From foaming waves, from raging winds they fly,
Spared for revenge, reserved for agony!
Oh! dark the fate that calls them from their home,
On this rude shore, my savage reign, to roam,

[1] Don Emmanuel de Sonza and his wife, Leonora de Sà.

And sternly saves them from a billowy tomb,
For woes more exquisite, more dreadful doom!
—Yes! he shall see the offspring, loved in vain,
Pierced with keen famine, die in lingering pain;
Shall see fierce Caffres every garment tear
From her, the soft, the idolized, the fair;
Shall see those limbs, of Nature's finest mould,
Bare to the sultry sun, or midnight-cold,
And, in long wanderings o'er a desert land
Those tender feet imprint the scorching sand.

"Yet more, yet deeper woe, shall those behold,
Who lived through toils unequall'd and untold!
On the wild shore, beneath the burning sky,
The hapless pair, exhausted, sink to die!
Bedew the rock with tears of pain intense,
Of bitterest anguish, thrilling every sense,
Till in one last embrace, with mortal throes,
Their struggling spirits mount from anguish to repose!"

As the dark phantom sternly thus portray'd
Our future ills, in Horror's deepest shade,—
"Who then art *thou?*" I cried, "dread being, tell
Each sense thus bending in amazement's spell?"
—With fearful shriek, far echoing o'er the tide,
Writhing his lips and eyes, he thus replied—
"Behold the genius of that secret shore,
Where the wind rages, and the billows roar;
That stormy Cape, for ages mine alone,
To Pompey, Strabo, Pliny, all unknown!
Far to the southern pole my throne extends,
That hidden rock, which Afric's region ends.

Behold that spirit, whose avenging might,
Whose fiercest wrath your daring deeds excite."

* * * * *

Thus having said, with strange, terrific cries,
The giant-spectre vanish'd from our eyes;
In sable clouds dissolved—while far around,
Dark ocean's heaving realms his parting yells resound!

A DIRGE.

Weep for the early lost!—
How many flowers were mingled in the crown
Thus, with the lovely, to the grave gone down,
E'en when life promised most,
How many hopes have wither'd—they that bow
To Heaven's dread will, feel all its mysteries now.

Did the young mother's eye
Behold her child, and close upon the day,
Ere from its glance th' awakening spirit's ray
In sunshine could reply?
—Then look for clouds to dim the fairest morn!
Oh! strong is faith, if woe like this be borne.

For there is hush'd on earth
A voice of gladness—there is veil'd a face,
Whose parting leaves a dark and silent place,
By the once-joyous hearth.
A smile hath pass'd, which fill'd its home with light;
A soul, whose beauty made that smile so bright!

But there *is* power with faith!
Power, e'en though nature, o'er the untimely grave
Must weep, when God resumes the gem He gave;
For sorrow comes of Death,
And with a yearning heart we linger on,
When they, whose glance unlock'd its founts, are gone!

But glory from the dust,
And praise to Him, the merciful, for those
On whose bright memory love may still repose,
With an immortal trust!
Praise for the dead, who leave us, when they part
Such hope as she hath left—"the pure in heart."

1823.

THE MAREMMA.

["NELLO DELLA PIETRA had espoused a lady of noble family at Sienna, named Madonna Pia. Her beauty was the admiration of Tuscany, and excited in the heart of her husband a jealousy, which, exasperated by false reports and groundless suspicions, at length drove him to the desperate resolution of Othello. It is difficult to decide whether the lady was quite innocent, but so Dante represents her. Her husband brought her into the Maremma, which, then as now, was a district destructive of health. He never told his unfortunate wife the reason of her banishment to so dangerous a country. He did not deign to utter complaint or accusation. He lived with her alone, in cold silence, without answering her questions, or listening to her remonstrances. He patiently waited till the pestilential air should destroy the health of this young lady. In a few months she died. Some chronicles, indeed, tell us that Nello used the dagger to hasten her death. It is certain that he survived her, plunged in sadness and perpetual silence. Dante had, in this incident, all the materials of an ample and very poetical narrative. But he bestows on it only four verses. He meets in Purgatory three spirits. One was a captain who fell fighting on the same side with him in the battle of Campaldino; the second, a gentleman assassinated by the treachery of the House of Este; the third, was a woman unknown to the poet, and who, after the others had spoken, turned towards him with these words:—

> Recorditi di me; che son la Pia,
> Sienna mi fe, disfecemi Maremma,
> Salsi colui che inanellata pria
> Disposando m' avea con la sua gemma.'"
>
> *Purgatorio*, cant. 5.

— *Edinburgh Review*, No. lviii.]

"Mais elle etait du monde, ou les plus belles choses,
Ont le pire destin;
Et Rose elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,
L'espace d'un Matin."

MALHERBE.

THERE are bright scenes beneath Italian skies,
Where glowing suns their purest light diffuse,
Uncultured flowers in wild profusion rise,
And nature lavishes her warmest hues;
But trust thou not her smile, her balmy breath,
Away! her charms are but the pomp of Death!

He, in the vine-clad bowers, unseen is dwelling,
Where the cool shade its freshness round thee throws,
His voice, in every perfumed zephyr swelling,
With gentlest whisper lures thee to repose;
And the soft sounds that through the foliage sigh,
But woo thee still to slumber and to die.

Mysterious danger lurks, a syren, there,
Not robed in terrors, or announced in gloom,
But stealing o'er thee in the scented air,
And veil'd in flowers, that smile to deck thy tomb;
How may we deem, amidst their deep array,
That heaven and earth but flatter to betray?

Sunshine, and bloom, and verdure! Can it be,
That these but charm us with destructive wiles?
Where shall we turn, O Nature, if in *thee*
Danger is mask'd in beauty—death in smiles?
Oh! still the Circe of that fatal shore,
Where she, the sun's bright daughter, dwelt of yore!

There, year by year, that secret peril spreads,
Disguised in loveliness, its baleful reign,
And viewless blights o'er many a landscape sheds,
Gay with the riches of the south, in vain,
O'er fairy bowers and palaces of state,
Passing unseen, to leave them desolate.

And pillar'd halls, whose airy colonnades
Were formed to echo music's choral tone,
Are silent now, amidst deserted shades,[1]
Peopled by sculpture's graceful forms alone;
And fountains dash unheard, by lone alcoves,
Neglected temples, and forsaken groves.

And there, where marble nymphs, in beauty gleaming,
'Midst the deep shades of plane and cypress rise,
By wave or grot might Fancy linger, dreaming
Of old Arcadia's woodland deities,—
Wild visions!—there no sylvan powers convene,—
Death reigns the genius of the Elysian scene.

Ye, too, illustrious hills of Rome! that bear
Traces of mightier beings on your brow,
O'er you that subtle spirit of the air
Extends the desert of his empire now;
Broods o'er the wrecks of altar, fane, and dome,
And makes the Cæsars' ruin'd halls his home.

Youth, valour, beauty, oft have felt his power,
His crown'd and chosen victims: o'er their lot

[1] See Madame de Staël's fine description, in her *Corinne*, of the Villa Borghese, deserted on account of malaria.

Hath fond affection wept; each blighted flower
In turn was loved and mourn'd, and is forgot.
But one who perish'd, left a tale of woe,
Meet for as deep a sigh as pity can bestow.

A voice of music, from Sienna's walls,
Is floating joyous on the summer air,
And there are banquets in her stately halls,
And graceful revels of the gay and fair,
And brilliant wreaths the altar have array'd,
Where meet her noblest youth, and loveliest maid.

To that young bride each grace hath Nature given,
Which glows on Art's divinest dream,—her eye
Hath a pure sunbeam of her native heaven—
Her cheek a tinge of morning's richest dye;
Fair as that daughter of the south, whose form
Still breathes and charms, in Vinci's colours warm.[1]

But is she blest?—for sometimes o'er her smile
A soft sweet shade of pensiveness is cast;
And in her liquid glance there seems awhile
To dwell some thought whose soul is with the past;
Yet soon it flies—a cloud that leaves no trace,
On the sky's azure, of its dwelling-place.

Perchance, at times, within her heart may rise
Remembrance of some early love or woe,
Faded, yet scarce forgotten—in her eyes
Wakening the half-form'd tear that may not flow;

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[1] An allusion to Leonardo da Vinci's picture of his wife Mona Lisa, supposed to be the most perfect imitation of Nature ever exhibited in painting.—See Vasari in his *Lives of the Painters.*

Yet radiant seems her lot as aught on earth,
Where still some pining thought comes darkly o'er
our mirth.

The world before her smiles—its changeful gaze
She hath not proved as yet; her path seems gay
With flowers and sunshine, and the voice of praise
Is still the joyous herald of her way;
And beauty's light around her dwells, to throw
O'er every scene its own resplendent glow.

Such is the young Bianca—graced with all
That nature, fortune, youth, at once can give;
Pure in their loveliness—her looks recall
Such dreams, as ne'er life's early bloom survive;
And, when she speaks, each thrilling tone is fraught
With sweetness, born of high and heavenly thought.

And he, to whom are breathed her vows of faith,
Is brave and noble—child of high descent,
He hath stood fearless in the ranks of death,
'Mid slaughter'd heaps, the warrior's monument:
And proudly marshall'd his Carroccio's[1] way,
Amidst the wildest wreck of war's array.

And his the chivalrous, commanding mien,
Where high-born grandeur blends with courtly grace;
Yet may a lightning glance at times be seen,
Of fiery passions, darting o'er his face,
And fierce the spirit kindling in his eye—
And e'en while yet we gaze, its quick, wild flashes die.

[1] See the description of this sort of consecrated war-chariot in Sismondi's *Histoire des Republiques Italiennes, &c.*, vol. i. p. 394.

And calmly can Pietra smile, concealing,
As if forgotten, vengeance, hate, remorse;
And veil the workings of each darker feeling,
Deep in his soul concentrating its force:
But yet, he loves—O! who hath loved, nor known
Affection's power exalt the bosom all its own?

The days roll on—and still Bianca's lot
Seems as a path of Eden—thou might'st deem
That grief, the mighty chastener, had forgot
To wake her soul from life's enchanted dream;
And, if her brow a moment's sadness wear,
It sheds but grace more intellectual there.

A few short years, and all is changed—her fate
Seems with some deep mysterious cloud oercast.
Have jealous doubts transform'd to wrath and hate,
The love whose glow expression's power surpass'd?
Lo! on Pietra's brow a sullen gloom
Is gathering day by day, prophetic of her doom.

O! can he meet that eye, of light serene,
Whence the pure spirit looks in radiance forth,
And view that bright intelligence of mien
Form'd to express but thoughts of loftiest worth,
Yet deem that vice within that heart can reign?
—How shall he e'er confide in aught on earth again?

In silence oft, with strange vindictive gaze,
Transient, yet fill'd with meaning stern and wild,
Her features, calm in beauty, he surveys,
Then turns away, and fixes on her child
So dark a glance, as thrills a mother's mind
With some vague fear, scarce own'd, and undefined

There stands a lonely dwelling, by the wave
Of the blue deep which bathes Italia's shore,
Far from all sounds, but rippling seas that lave
Grey rocks with foliage richly shadow'd o'er,
And sighing winds, that murmur through the wood,
Fringing the beach of that Hesperian flood.

Fair is that house of solitude—and fair
The green Maremma, far around it spread,
A sun-bright waste of beauty—yet an air
Of brooding sadness o'er the scene is shed,
No human footstep tracks the lone domain,
The desert of luxuriance glows in vain.

And silent are the marble halls that rise
'Mid founts, and cypress walks, and olive groves:
All sleeps in sunshine, 'neath cerulean skies,
And still around the sea-breeze lightly roves;
Yet every trace of man reveals alone,
That there life once hath flourished—and is gone

There, till around them slowly, softly stealing,
The summer air, deceit in every sigh,
Came fraught with death, its power no sign revealing,
Thy sires, Pietra, dwelt, in days gone by;
And strains of mirth and melody have flow'd
Where stands, all voiceless now, the still abode.

And thither doth her Lord, remorseless, bear
Bianca with her child—his alter'd eye
And brow a stern and fearful calmness wear,
While his dark spirit seals their doom—to die;
And the deep bodings of his victim's heart,
Tell her, from fruitless hope at once to part.

It is the summer's glorious prime—and blending
Its blue transparence with the skies, the deep,
Each tint of Heaven upon its breast descending,
Scarce murmurs as it heaves, in glassy sleep,
And on its wave reflects, more softly bright,
That lovely shore of solitude and light.

Fragrance in each warm southern gale is breathing,
Deck'd with young flowers the rich Maremma glows,
Neglected vines the trees are wildly wreathing,
And the fresh myrtle in exuberance blows,
And far around, a deep and sunny bloom
Mantles the scene, as garlands robe the tomb.

Yes! 'tis *thy* tomb, Bianca! fairest flower!
The voice that calls thee speaks in every gale,
Which o'er thee breathing with insidious power,
Bids the young roses of thy cheek turn pale,
And fatal in its softness, day by day,
Steals from that eye some trembling spark away.

But sink not yet; for there are darker woes,
Daughter of Beauty! in thy spring-morn fading,
Sufferings more keen for thee reserved than those
Of lingering death, which thus thine eye are shading!
Nerve then thy heart to meet that bitter lot:
'Tis agony—but soon to be forgot!

What deeper pangs maternal hearts can wring,
Than hourly to behold the spoiler's breath
Shedding, as mildews on the bloom of spring,
O'er Infancy's fair cheek the blight of death?
To gaze and shrink, as gathering shades o'ercast
The pale smooth brow, yet watch it to the last!

Such pangs were thine, young mother!—Thou didst
bend
O'er thy fair boy, and raise his drooping head;
And faint and hopeless, far from every friend,
Keep thy sad midnight-vigils near his bed,
And watch his patient, supplicating eye,
Fix'd upon thee—on thee!—who could'st no aid supply!

There was no voice to cheer thy lonely woe
Through those dark hours—to thee the wind's low sigh,
And the faint murmur of the ocean's flow,
Came like some spirit whispering—"He must die!"
And thou didst vainly clasp him to the breast
His young and sunny smile so oft with hope had blest.

'Tis past—that fearful trial—he is gone;
But thou, sad mourner! hast not long to weep;
The hour of nature's charter'd peace comes on,
And thou shalt share thine infant's holy sleep.
A few short sufferings yet—and death shall be
As a bright messenger from heaven to thee.

But ask not—hope not—one relenting thought
From him who doom'd thee thus to waste away,
Whose heart, with sullen, speechless vengeance
fraught,
Broods in dark triumph o'er thy slow decay;
And coldly, sternly, silently can trace
The gradual withering of each youthful grace.

And yet the day of vain remorse shall come,
When thou, bright victim! on his dreams shalt rise
As an accusing angel—and thy tomb,
A martyr's shrine, be hallow'd in his eyes!

Then shall thine innocence his bosom wring,
More than thy fancied guilt with jealous pangs could
sting.

Lift thy meek eyes to heaven—for all on earth,
Young sufferer! fades before thee—Thou art lone—
Hope, Fortune, Love, smiled brightly on thy birth,
Thine hour of death is all Affliction's own!
It is our task to suffer—and our fate
To learn that mighty lesson, soon or late.

The season's glory fades—the vintage-lay
Through joyous Italy resounds no more;
But mortal loveliness hath pass'd away,
Fairer than aught in summer's glowing store.
Beauty and youth are gone—behold them such
As Death hath made them with his blighting touch!

The summer's breath came o'er them—and they died!
Softly it came to give luxuriance birth,
Call'd forth young nature in her festal pride,
But bore to them their summons from the earth!
Again shall blow that mild, delicious breeze,
And wake to life and light all flowers—but these.

No sculptured urn, nor verse thy virtues telling,
O lost and loveliest one! adorns thy grave;
But o'er that humble cypress-shaded dwelling
The dew-drops glisten, and the wild-flowers wave—
Emblems more meet, in transient light and bloom,
For thee, who thus didst pass in brightness to the tomb!

STANZAS

TO THE MEMORY OF GEORGE THE THIRD.

"Among many nations were there no King like him." —— NEHEMIAH.

"Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel!" —— SAMUEL.

ANOTHER warning sound! the funeral bell,
Startling the cities of the isle once more
With measured tones of melancholy swell,
Strikes on th' awaken'd heart from shore to shore.
He, at whose coming monarchs sink to dust,
The chambers of our palaces hath trod,
And the long-suffering spirit of the just,
Pure from its ruins, hath return'd to God!
Yet may not England o'er her Father weep;
Thoughts to her bosom crowd, too many, and too deep.

Vain voice of Reason, hush!—they yet must flow,
The unrestrain'd, involuntary tears;
A thousand feelings sanctify the woe,
Roused by the glorious shades of vanish'd years.
Tell us no more 'tis not the time for grief,
Now that the exile of the soul is past,
And Death, blest messenger of Heaven's relief,
Hath borne the wanderer to his rest at last;
For him, eternity hath tenfold day,
We feel, we know, 'tis thus—yet nature will have way.

What though amidst us, like a blasted oak,
Sadd'ning the scene where once it nobly reign'd,
A dread memorial of the lightning stroke,
Stamp'd with its fiery record, he remain'd;
Around that shatter'd tree still fondly clung
Th' undying tendrils of our love, which drew
Fresh nature from its deep decay, and sprung
Luxuriant thence, to Glory's ruin true;
While England hung her trophies on the stem,
That desolately stood, unconscious e'en of THEM.

Of *them* unconscious! Oh mysterious doom!
Who shall unfold the counsels of the skies?
His was the voice which roused, as from the tomb,
The realm's high soul to loftiest energies!
His was the spirit, o'er the isles which threw
The mantle of its fortitude; and wrought
In every bosom, powerful to renew
Each dying spark of pure and generous thought;
The star of tempests! beaming on the mast,[1]
The seaman's torch of Hope, 'midst perils deepening fast.

Then from th' unslumbering influence of his worth,
Strength, as of inspiration, fill'd the land;
A young, but quenchless, flame went brightly forth,
Kindled by him—who saw it not expand!

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[1] The glittering meteor, like a star, which often appears about a ship during tempests; if seen upon the main-mast, is considered by the sailors as an omen of good weather.—See DAMPIER'S *Voyages*.

Such was the will of heaven — the gifted seer,
Who with his God had communed, face to face
And from the house of bondage, and of fear,
In faith victorious, led the chosen race;
He through the desert and the waste their guide,
Saw dimly from afar, the promised land — and died.

O full of days and virtues! on thy head
Centred the woes of many a bitter lot;
Fathers have sorrow'd o'er their beauteous dead,
Eyes, quench'd in night, the sunbeam have forgot;
Minds have striven buoyantly with evil years,
And sunk beneath their gathering weight at length;
But Pain for thee had fill'd a cup of tears,
Where every anguish mingled all its strength;
By thy lost child we saw thee weeping stand,
And shadows deep around fell from th' Eternal's hand.

Then came the noon of glory, which thy dreams
Perchance of yore had faintly prophesied;
But what to *thee* the splendour of its beams?
The ice-rock glows not 'midst the summer's pride!
Nations leap'd up to joy — as streams that burst,
At the warm touch of spring, their frozen chain,
And o'er the plains, whose verdure once they nursed,
Roll in exulting melody again;
And bright o'er earth the long majestic line
Of England's triumphs swept, to rouse all hearts — but thine.

Oh! what a dazzling vision, by the veil
That o'er thy spirit hung, was shut from thee,
When sceptred chieftains throng'd with palms to hail
The crowning isle, th' anointed of the sea!

Within thy palaces the lords of earth
Met to rejoice—rich pageants glitter'd by,
And stately revels imaged, in their mirth,
The old magnificence of chivalry.
They reach'd not thee—amidst them, yet alone,
Stillness and gloom begirt one dim and shadowy throne.

Yet there was mercy still—if joy no more
Within that blasted circle might intrude,
Earth had no grief whose footstep might pass o'er
The silent limits of its solitude!
If all unheard the bridal song awoke
Our hearts' full echoes, as it swell'd on high;
Alike unheard the sudden dirge, that broke
On the glad strain, with dread solemnity!
If the land's rose unheeded wore its bloom,
Alike unfelt the storm that swept it to the tomb!

And she, who, tried through all the stormy past,
Severely, deeply proved, in many an hour,
Watch'd o'er thee, firm and faithful to the last,
Sustain'd inspired, by strong affection's power;
If to thy soul her voice no music bore—
If thy closed eye and wandering spirit caught
No light from looks, that fondly would explore
Thy mien, for traces of responsive thought;
Oh! thou wert spared the pang that would have thrill'd
Thine inmost heart, when death that anxious bosom still'd.

Thy loved ones fell around thee. Manhood's prime,
Youth, with its glory, in its fulness, age,

All, at the gates of their eternal clime
Lay down, and closed their mortal pilgrimage;
The land wore ashes for its perish'd flowers,
The grave's imperial harvest. Thou, meanwhile,
Didst walk unconscious through thy royal towers,
The one that wept not in the tearful isle!
As a tired warrior, on his battle-plain,
Breathes deep in dreams amidst the mourners and the slain.

And who can tell what visions might be thine?
The stream of thought, though broken, still was pure!
Still o'er that wave the stars of heaven might shine,
Where earthly image would no more endure!
Though many a step, of once-familiar sound,
Came as a stranger's o'er thy closing ear,
And voices breathed forgotten tones around,
Which that paternal heart once thrill'd to hear;
The mind hath senses of its own, and powers
To people boundless worlds, in its most wandering hours.

Nor might the phantoms to thy spirit known
Be dark or wild, creations of remorse;
Unstain'd by thee, the blameless past had thrown
No fearful shadows o'er the future's course:
For thee no cloud, from memory's dread abyss,
Might shape such forms as haunt the tyrant's eye;
And, closing up each avenue of bliss,
Murmur their summons, to "despair and die!"
No! e'en though joy depart, though reason cease,
Still virtue's ruin'd home is redolent of peace.

They might be with thee still—the loved, the tried,
The fair, the lost—they might be with thee still!
More softly seen, in radiance purified
From each dim vapour of terrestrial ill;
Long after earth received them, and the note
Of the last requiem o'er their dust was pour'd,
As passing sunbeams o'er thy soul might float
Those forms, from us withdrawn—to thee restored!
Spirits of holiness, in light reveal'd,
To commune with a mind whose source of tears was seal'd.

Came they with tidings from the worlds above,
Those viewless regions where the weary rest?
Sever'd from earth, estranged from mortal love,
Was thy mysterious converse with the blest?
Or shone their visionary presence bright
With human beauty?—did their smiles renew
Those days of sacred and serene delight,
When fairest beings in thy pathway grew?
Oh! Heaven hath balm for every wound it makes,
Healing the broken heart; it smites, but ne'er forsakes.

These may be fantasies—and this alone,
Of all we picture in our dreams, is sure;
That rest, made perfect, is at length thine own,
Rest, in thy God immortally secure!
Enough for tranquil faith; released from all
The woes that graved Heaven's lessons on thy brow,
No cloud to dim, no fetter to enthral,
Haply thine eye is on thy people now;

Whose love around thee still its offerings shed,
Though vainly sweet, as flowers, grief's tribute to
the dead.

But if th' ascending, disembodied mind,
Borne, on the wings of morning, to the skies,
May cast one glance of tenderness behind
On scenes once hallow'd by its mortal ties,
How much hast thou to gaze on! all that lay
By the dark mantle of thy soul conceal'd,
The might, the majesty, the proud array
Of England's march o'er many a noble field,
All spread beneath thee, in a blaze of light,
Shine like some glorious land, view'd from an Alpine
height.

Away, presumptuous thought!—departed saint!
To thy freed vision what can earth display
Of pomp, of royalty, that is not faint,
Seen from the birth-place of celestial day?
Oh! pale and weak the sun's reflected rays,
E'en in their fervour of meridian heat,
To him, who in the sanctuary may gaze
On the bright cloud that fills the mercy-seat!
And thou may'st view, from thy divine abode,
The dust of empires flit before a breath of God.

And yet we mourn thee! Yes! thy place is void
Within our hearts—there veil'd thine image dwelt,
But cherish'd still; and o'er that tie destroy'd,
Though faith rejoice, fond nature still must melt.

Beneath the long-loved sceptre of thy sway,
Thousands were born, who now in dust repose,
And many a head, with years and sorrows grey,
Wore youth's bright tresses, when thy star arose;
And many a glorious mind, since that fair dawn,
Hath fill'd our sphere with light, now to its source withdrawn.

Earthquakes have rock'd the nations:—things revered,
Th' ancestral fabrics of the world, went down
In ruins, from whose stones Ambition rear'd
His lonely pyramid of dread renown.
But when the fires that long had slumber'd, pent
Deep in men's bosoms, with volcanic force,
Bursting their prison-house, each bulwark rent,
And swept each holy barrier from their course,
Firm and unmoved, amidst that lava-flood,
Still, by thine arm upheld, our ancient landmarks stood.

Be they eternal!—Be thy children found
Still to their country's altars true like thee!
And, while "the name of Briton" is a sound
Of rallying music to the brave and free,
With the high feelings, at the word which swell,
To make the breast a shrine for Freedom's flame,
Be mingled thoughts of him, who loved so well,
Who left so pure, its heritage of fame!
Let earth with trophies guard the conqueror's dust,
Heaven in our souls embalms the memory of the just.

All else shall pass away—the thrones of kings,
The very traces of their *tombs* depart;
But number not with perishable things
The holy records Virtue leaves the heart,
Heir-looms from race to race!—and oh! in days,
When, by the yet unborn, thy deeds are blest,
When our sons learn, "as household words," thy praise,
Still on thine offspring, may thy spirit rest!
And many a name of that imperial line,
Father and patriot! blend, in England's songs, with thine!

A TALE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

A FRAGMENT.

The moonbeam, quivering o'er the wave,
Sleeps in pale gold on wood and hill,
The wild wind slumbers in its cave,
And heaven is cloudless—earth is still!
The pile, that crowns yon savage height
With battlements of Gothic might,
Rises in softer pomp array'd,
Its massy towers half lost in shade,
Half touch'd with mellowing light!
The rays of night, the tints of time,
Soft mingling on its dark-grey stone
O'er its rude strength and mien sublime,
A placid smile have thrown;
And far beyond, where wild and high,
Bounding the pale blue summer sky,
A mountain-vista meets the eye,
Its dark, luxuriant woods assume
A pencil'd shade, a softer gloom;
Its jutting cliffs have caught the light,
Its torrents glitter through the night,
While every cave and deep recess
Frowns in more shadowy awfulness.
Scarce moving on the glassy deep
Yon gallant vessel seems to sleep,

But darting from its side,
How swiftly does its boat design
A slender, silvery, waving line
Of radiance o'er the tide!
No sound is on the summer seas,
But the low dashing of the oar,
And faintly sighs the midnight breeze
Through woods that fringe the rocky shore.
—The boat has reach'd the silent bay,
The dashing oar has ceased to play,
The breeze has murmur'd and has died
In forest-shades, on ocean's tide.
No step, no tone, no breath of sound
Disturbs the loneliness profound;
And midnight spreads o'er earth and main
A calm so holy and so deep,
That voice of mortal were profane,
To break on nature's sleep!
It is the hour for thought to soar,
High o'er the cloud of earthly woes;
For rapt devotion to adore,
For passion to repose;
And virtue to forget her tears,
In visions of sublimer spheres!
For oh! those transient gleams of heaven,
To calmer, purer spirits given,
Children of hallow'd peace, are known
In solitude and shade alone!
Like flowers that shun the blaze of noon,
To blow beneath the midnight moon,
The garish world they will not bless,
But only live in loneliness!

Hark! did some note of plaintive swell
  Melt on the stillness of the air?
Or was it fancy's powerful spell
  That woke such sweetness there?
For wild and distant it arose,
Like sounds that bless the bard's repose,
When in lone wood, or mossy cave
He dreams beside some fountain-wave,
And fairy worlds delight the eyes
Wearied with life's realities.
—Was it illusion?—yet again
Rises and falls th' enchanted strain,
  Mellow, and sweet, and faint,
As if some spirit's touch had given
The soul of sound to harp of heaven
  To soothe a dying saint!
Is it the mermaid's distant shell,
  Warbling beneath the moonlit wave?
—Such witching tones might lure full well
  The seaman to his grave!
Sure from no mortal touch ye rise,
Wild, soft, aerial melodies!
—Is it the song of woodland-fay
  From sparry grot, or haunted bower?
Hark! floating on, the magic lay
  Draws near yon ivied tower!
Now nearer still, the listening ear
May catch sweet harp-notes, faint, yet clear;
And accents low, as if in fear,
  Thus murmur, half suppress'd;—
"Awake! the moon is bright on high,
The sea is calm, the bark is nigh,
  The world is hush'd to rest!"

Then sinks the voice—the strain is o'er,
Its last low cadence dies along the shore.

Fair Bertha hears th' expected song,
Swift from her tower she glides along;
No echo to her tread awakes,
Her fairy step no slumber breaks,
And, in that hour of silence deep,
While all around the dews of sleep
O'erpower each sense, each eyelid steep,
Quick throbs her heart with hope and fear,
Her dark eye glistens with a tear.
Half-wavering now, the varying cheek
And sudden pause, her doubts bespeak,
The lip now flush'd, now pale as death,
The trembling frame, the fluttering breath!
Oh! in that moment, o'er her soul,
What struggling passions claim control!
Fear, duty, love, in conflict high,
By turns have won th' ascendency;
And as, all tremulously bright,
Streams o'er her face the beam of night,
What thousand mix'd emotions play
O'er that fair face, and melt away:
Like forms whose quick succession gleams
O'er fancy's rainbow-tinted dreams;
Like the swift-glancing lights that rise
'Midst the wild cloud of stormy skies,
And traverse ocean o'er;
So in that full, impassion'd eye
The changeful meanings rise and die,
Just seen—and then no more!

But oh! too short that pause—again
Thrills to her heart that witching strain:—
"Awake! the midnight moon is bright,
Awake! the moments wing their flight,
Haste! or they speed in vain!"

O, call of love! thy potent spell
O'er that weak heart prevails too well;
The "still small voice" is heard no more
That pleaded duty's cause before,
And fear is hush'd, and doubt is gone,
And pride forgot, and reason flown!
Her cheek, whose colour came and fled,
Resumes its warmest, brightest red,
Her step its quick elastic tread,
Her eye its beaming smile!
Through lonely court and silent hall,
Flits her light shadow o'er the wall,
And still that low, harmonious call
Melts on her ear the while!
Though love's quick ear alone could tell
The words its accents faintly swell:—
"Awake, while yet the lingering night
And stars and seas befriend our flight,
O! haste, while all is well!"

The halls, the courts, the gates, are past,
She gains the moonlit beach at last.
Who waits to guide her trembling feet?
Who flies the fugitive to greet?
He, to her youthful heart endear'd
By all it e'er had hoped and feared,

Twined with each wish, with every thought,
Each day-dream fancy e'er had wrought,
Whose tints portray, with flattering skill,
What brighter worlds alone fulfil!
—Alas! that aught so fair should fly,
Thy blighting wand, Reality!

A chieftain's mien her Osbert bore,
A pilgrim's lowly robes he wore,
Disguise that vainly strove to hide
Bearing and glance of martial pride;
For he in many a battle scene
On many a rampart-breach had been;
Had sternly smiled at danger nigh,
Had seen the valiant bleed and die,
And proudly rear'd on hostile tower,
'Midst falchion-clash, and arrowy shower,
Britannia's banner high!
And though some ancient feud had taught
His Bertha's sire to loathe his name,
More noble warrior never fought,
For glory's prize, or England's fame.
And well his dark, commanding eye,
And form and step of stately grace,
Accorded with achievements high,
Soul of emprize and chivalry,
Bright name, and generous race!

His cheek, embrown'd by many a sun,
Tells a proud tale of glory won,
Of vigil, march, and combat rude,
Valour, and toil, and fortitude!

E'en while youth's earliest blushes threw
Warm o'er that cheek, their vivid hue,
His gallant soul, his stripling-form,
Had braved the battle's rudest storm;
When England's conquering archers stood,
And dyed thy plain, Poitiers, with blood,
When shiver'd axe, and cloven shield,
And shatter'd helmet, strew'd the field,
And France around her King in vain,
Had marshall'd valour's noblest train;
In that dread strife, his lightning eye,
Had flash'd with transport keen and high,
And 'midst the battle's wildest tide,
Throbb'd his young heart with hope and pride.
Alike that fearless heart could brave
Death on the war-field or the wave;
Alike in tournament or fight,
That ardent spirit found delight!
Yet oft, 'midst hostile scenes afar,
  Bright o'er his soul a vision came,
Rising, like some benignant star,
On stormy seas, or plains of war,
  To soothe, with hopes more dear than fame,
  The heart that throbb'd to Bertha's name!
And 'midst the wildest rage of fight,
And in the deepest calm of night,
To her his thoughts would wing their flight,
  With fond devotion warm;
Oft would those glowing thoughts portray
Some home, from tumults far away,
  Graced with that angel form!
And now his spirit fondly deems
Fulfill'd its loveliest, dearest dreams!

Who, with pale cheek, and locks of snow,
In minstrel garb, attends the chief?
The moonbeam on his thoughtful brow
Reveals a shade of grief.
Sorrow and time have touch'd his face,
With mournful yet majestic grace,
Soft as the melancholy smile
Of sunset on some ruin'd pile!
—It is the bard, whose song had power
To lure the maiden from her tower;
The bard whose wild, inspiring lays,
E'en in gay childhood's earliest days,
First woke, in Osbert's kindling breast,
The flame that will not be represt,
The pulse that throbs for praise!
Those lays had banish'd from his eye,
The bright, soft tears of infancy,
Had soothed the boy to calm repose,
Had hush'd his bosom's earliest woes;
And when the light of thought awoke,
When first young reason's day-spring broke
More powerful still, they bade arise
His spirit's burning energies!
Then the bright dream of glory warm'd,
Then the loud pealing war-song charm'd,
The legends of each martial line,
The battle-tales of Palestine;
And oft, since then, *his* deeds had proved
Themes of the lofty lays he loved!
Now, at triumphant love's command,
Since Osbert leaves his native land,
Forsaking glory's high career,
For her, than glory far more dear:

Since hope's gay dream, and meteor ray,
To distant regions points his way,
That there Affection's hands may dress,
A fairy bower for happiness;
That fond, devoted bard, though now
Time's wint'ry garland wreathes his brow,
Though quench'd the sunbeam of his eye,
And fled his spirit's buoyancy;
And strength and enterprise are past,
Still follows constant to the last!

Though his sole wish was but to die
'Midst the calm scenes of days gone by;
And all that hallows and endears
The memory of departed years—
Sorrow, and joy, and time, have twined
To those loved scenes, his pensive mind;
Ah! what can tear the links apart,
That bind his chieftain to his heart?
What smile but *his* with joy can light
The eye obscured by age's night?
Last of a loved and honour'd line,
Last tie to earth in life's decline,
Till death its lingering spark shall dim,
That faithful eye must gaze on him!

Silent and swift, with footstep light,
Haste on those fugitives of night:
They reach the boat—the rapid oar
Soon wafts them from the wooded shore—
The bark is gain'd—a gallant few,
Vassals of Osbert, form its crew;

The pennant, in the moonlight beam,
With soft suffusion glows;
From the white sail a silvery gleam,
Falls on the wave's repose;
Long shadows undulating play,
From mast and streamer, o'er the bay;
But still so hush'd the summer-air,
They tremble, 'midst that scene so fair,
Lest morn's first beam behold them there
—Wake, viewless wanderer! breeze of night,
From river-wave, or mountain-height,
Or dew-bright couch of moss and flowers,
By haunted spring, in forest bowers;
Or dost thou lurk in pearly cell,
In amber grot, where mermaids dwell,
And cavern'd gems their lustre throw
O'er the red sea-flowers' vivid glow?
Where treasures, not for mortal gaze,
In solitary splendour blaze;
And sounds, ne'er heard by mortal ear,
Swell through the deep's unfathom'd sphere?
What grove of that mysterious world,
Holds thy light wing in slumber furl'd?
Awake! o'er glittering seas to rove,
Awake! to guide the bark of love!
Swift fly the midnight hours, and soon
Shall fade the bright propitious moon;
Soon shall the waning stars grow pale,
E'en now—but lo! the rustling sail
Swells to the new-sprung ocean gale!
The bark glides on—their fears are o'er,
Recedes the bold romantic shore,

Its features mingling fast;
Gaze, Bertha, gaze, thy lingering eye
May still each lovely scene descry
Of years for ever past!
There wave the woods, beneath whose shade,
With bounding step, thy childhood play'd;
'Midst ferny glades, and mossy lawns,
Free as their native birds and fawns;
Listening the sylvan sounds, that float
On each low breeze, 'midst dells remote
The ringdove's deep, melodious moan,
The rustling deer in thickets lone;
The wild-bee's hum, the aspen's sigh,
The wood-stream's plaintive harmony.
Dear scenes of many a sportive hour,
There thy own mountains darkly tower!
'Midst their grey rocks no glen so rude,
But thou hast loved its solitude!
No path so wild, but thou hast known
And traced its rugged course alone!
The earliest wreath that bound thy hair,
Was twined of glowing heath-flowers there.
There, in the day-spring of thy years,
Undimm'd by passions or by tears,
Oft, while thy bright, enraptured eye
Wandered o'er ocean, earth, or sky,
While the wild breeze that round thee blew,
Tinged thy warm cheek with richer hue;
Pure as the skies that o'er thy head
Their clear and cloudless azure spread;
Pure as that gale, whose light wing drew
Its freshness from the mountain dew;

Glow'd thy young heart with feelings high,
A heaven of hallow'd ecstasy!
Such days were thine! ere love had drawn
A cloud o'er that celestial dawn!
As the clear dews in morning's beam,
With soft reflected colouring stream,
Catch every tint of eastern gem,
To form the rose's diadem;
But vanish when the noontide hour
Glows fiercely on the shrinking flower;
Thus in thy soul each calm delight,
Like morn's first dew-drops, pure and bright,
Fled swift from passion's blighting fire,
Or linger'd only to expire!

Spring, on thy native hills again,
  Shall bid neglected wild-flowers rise,
And call forth, in each grassy glen,
  Her brightest emerald dyes!
There shall the lonely mountain-rose,
Wreath of the cliffs, again disclose;
'Midst rocky dells, each well-known stream,
Shall sparkle in the summer beam;
The birch, o'er precipice and cave,
Its feathery foliage still shall wave;
The ash 'midst rugged clefts unveil
Its coral clusters to the gale,
And autumn shed a warmer bloom,
O'er the rich heath and glowing broom.
But thy light footstep there no more,
Each path, each dingle shall explore;
In vain may smile each green recess,
—Who now shall pierce its loneliness?

The stream through shadowy glens may stray,
— Who now shall trace its glistening way?
In solitude, in silence deep,
Shrined 'midst her rocks, shall echo sleep,
No lute's wild swell again shall rise,
To wake her mystic melodies.
All soft may blow the mountain air,
— It will not wave thy graceful hair!
The mountain-rose may bloom and die,
— It will not meet thy smiling eye!
But like those scenes of vanish'd days,
Shall others ne'er delight;
Far lovelier lands shall meet thy gaze,
Yet seem not half so bright!
O'er the dim woodlands' fading hue,
Still gleams yon Gothic pile on high;
Gaze on, while yet 'tis thine to view
That home of infancy!
Heed not the night-dew's chilling power,
Heed not the sea-wind's coldest hour,
But pause, and linger on the deck,
Till of those towers no trace, no speck,
Is gleaming o'er the main;
For when the mist of morn shall rise,
Blending the sea, the shore, the skies,
That home, once vanish'd from thine eyes,
Shall bless them ne'er again!
There the dark tales and songs of yore,
First with strange transport thrill'd thy soul,
E'en while their fearful, mystic lore,
From thy warm cheek the life-bloom stole;

There, while thy father's raptured ear,
Dwelt fondly on a strain so dear,
And in his eye the trembling tear
  Reveal'd his spirit's trance;
How oft, those echoing halls along,
Thy thrilling voice has swell'd the song,
Tradition wild of other days,
Of troubadour's heroic lays,
  Or legend of romance!
Oh! many an hour has there been thine,
  That memory's pencil oft shall dress
In softer shades, and tints that shine
  In mellow'd loveliness!
While thy sick heart, and fruitless tears,
  Shall mourn, with fond and deep regret,
The sunshine of thine early years,
  Scarce deem'd so radiant—till it set!
The cloudless peace, unprized till gone,
The bliss, till vanish'd, hardly known!

On rock and turret, wood and hill,
The fading moonbeams linger still;
Still, Bertha, gaze on yon grey tower,
At evening's last and sweetest hour,
While varying still, the western skies
Flush'd the clear seas with rainbow-dyes,
Whose warm suffusions glow'd and pass'd,
Each richer, lovelier, than the last;
How oft, while gazing on the deep,
That seem'd a heaven of peace to sleep,
As if its wave, so still, so fair,
More frowning mien might never wear,

The twilight calm of mental rest,
Would steal in silence o'er thy breast,
And wake that dear and balmy sigh,
That softly breathes the spirit's harmony!
—Ah! ne'er again shall hours to thee be given,
Of joy on earth—so near allied to Heaven!

Why starts the tear to Bertha's eye?
Is not her long-loved Osbert nigh?
Is there a grief his voice, his smile,
His words, are fruitless to beguile?
—Oh! bitter to the youthful heart,
That scarce a pang, a care has known,
The hour when first from scenes we part,
Where life's bright spring has flown!
Forsaking, o'er the world to roam,
That little shrine of peace—our home!
E'en if delighted fancy throw
O'er that cold world, her brightest glow,
Painting its untried paths with flowers,
That will not live in earthly bowers;
(Too frail, too exquisite, to bear
One breath of life's ungenial air;)
E'en if such dreams of hope arise,
As Heaven alone can realize;
Cold were the breast that would not heave
One sigh, the home of youth to leave;
Stern were the heart that would not swell
To breathe life's saddest word—farewell!
Though earth has many a deeper woe,
Though tears, more bitter far, must flow,
That hour, whate'er our future lot,
That first fond grief, is ne'er forgot!

Such was the pang of Bertha's heart,
The thought, that bade the tear-drop start;
And Osbert by her side
Heard the deep sigh, whose bursting swell
Nature's fond struggle told too well;
And days of future bliss portray'd,
And love's own eloquence essay'd,
To soothe his plighted bride!
Of bright Arcadian scenes he tells,
In that sweet land to which they fly;
The vine-clad rocks, the fragrant dells
Of blooming Italy.
For he had roved a pilgrim there,
And gazed on many a spot so fair,
It seem'd like some enchanted grove,
Where only peace, and joy, and love,
Those exiles of the world, might rove,
And breathe its heavenly air;
And, all unmix'd with ruder tone,
Their "wood-notes wild" be heard alone!

Far from the frown of stern control,
That vainly would subdue the soul,
There shall their long-affianced hands,
Be joined in consecrated bands,
And in some rich, romantic vale,
Circled with heights of Alpine snow,
Where citron-woods enrich the gale,
And scented shrubs their balm exhale,
And flowering myrtles blow;
And 'midst the mulberry boughs on high,
Weaves the wild vine her tapestry:

On some bright streamlet's emerald side,
Where cedars wave, in graceful pride,
Bosom'd in groves, their home shall rise,
A shelter'd bower of Paradise!

Thus would the lover soothe to rest
With tales of hope her anxious breast;
Nor vain that dear enchanting lore,
Her soul's bright visions to restore,
And bid gay phantoms of delight
Float, in soft colouring, o'er her sight.
—Oh! youth, sweet May-morn, fled so soon,
Far brighter than life's loveliest noon,
How oft thy spirit's buoyant power
Will triumph, e'en in sorrow's hour
Prevailing o'er regret!
As rears its head th' elastic flower
Though the dark tempest's recent shower
Hang on its petals yet!

Ah! not so soon can hope's gay smile
The aged bard to joy beguile;
Those silent years that steal away
The cheek's warm rose, the eye's bright ray,
Win from the mind a nobler prize
E'en all its buoyant energies!
For him the April days are past,
When grief was but a fleeting cloud:
No transient shade will sorrow cast,
When age the spirit's might has bow'd!
And, as he sees the land grow dim,
That native land, now lost to him,

Fix'd are his eyes, and clasp'd his hands,
And long in speechless grief he stands.
So desolately calm his air,
He seems an image, wrought to bear
The stamp of deep, though hush'd despair;
Motion and life no sign bespeaks
Save that the night-breeze, o'er his cheeks,
Just waves his silvery hair!
Nought else could teach the eye to know
He was no sculptured form of woe!

Long gazing o'er the dark'ning flood,
Pale in that silent grief he stood;
Till the cold moon was waning fast,
And many a lovely star had died,
And the grey heavens deep shadows cast
Far o'er the slumbering tide;
And robed in one dark solemn hue,
Arose the distant shore to view.
Then, starting from his trance of woe,
Tears, long suppress'd, in freedom flow,
While thus his wild and plaintive strain
Blends with the murmur of the main.

THE BARD'S FAREWELL.

Thou setting moon! when next thy rays
Are trembling on the shadowy deep,
The land, now fading from my gaze,
These eyes in vain shall weep;
And wander o'er the lonely sea,
And fix their tearful glance on thee,
On thee! whose light so softly gleams
Through the green oaks that fringe my native streams.

But, 'midst those ancient groves, no more
Shall I thy quivering lustre hail,
Its plaintive strain my harp must pour,
To swell a foreign gale;
The rocks, the woods, whose echoes woke,
When its full tones their stillness broke,
Deserted now, shall hear alone,
The brook's wild voice, the wind's mysterious moan.

And oh! ye fair, forsaken halls,
Left by your lord to slow decay,
Soon shall the trophies on your walls
Be mouldering fast away!
There shall no choral songs resound,
There shall no festal board be crown'd;
But ivy wreathe the silent gate,
And all be hush'd, and cold, and desolate.

No banner from the stately tower,
Shall spread its blazon'd folds on high,
There the wild brier and summer flower,
Unmark'd, shall wave and die.
Home of the mighty! thou art lone,
The noonday of thy pride is gone,
And, 'midst thy solitude profound,
A step shall echo like unearthly sound!

From thy cold hearths no festal blaze
Shall fill the hall with ruddy light,
Nor welcome, with convivial rays,
Some pilgrim of the night;

But there shall grass luxuriant spread,
As o'er the dwellings of the dead;
And the deep swell of every blast,
Seem a wild dirge for years of grandeur past

And I—my joy of life is fled,
My spirit's power, my bosom's glow,
The raven locks that graced my head,
Wave in a wreath of snow!
And where the star of youth arose,
I deem'd life's lingering ray should close,
And those loved trees my tomb o'ershade,
Beneath whose arching bowers my childhood play'd.

Vain dream! that tomb in distant earth
Shall rise, forsaken and forgot;
And thou, sweet land, that gav'st me birth,
A grave must yield me not!
Yet, haply he for whom I leave
Thy shores, in life's dark winter-eve,
When cold the hand, and closed the lays,
And mute the voice he loved to praise,
O'er the hush'd harp one tear may shed,
And one frail garland o'er the minstrel's bed!

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

'Twas night in Babylon: yet many a beam,
Of lamps far glittering from her domes on high,
Shone, brightly mingling in Euphrates' stream
With the clear stars of that Chaldean sky,
Whose azure knows no cloud: each whisper'd sigh
Of the soft night-breeze through her terrace bowers,
Bore deepening tones of joy and melody,
O'er an illumined wilderness of flowers;
And the glad city's voice went up from all her towers.

But prouder mirth was in the kingly hall,
Where, 'midst adoring slaves, a gorgeous band,
High at the stately midnight festival,
Belshazzar sat enthroned. There luxury's hand
Had shower'd around all treasures that expand
Beneath the burning East; all gems that pour
The sunbeams back; all sweets of many a land,
Whose gales waft incense from their spicy shore;
—But mortal pride look'd on, and still demanded more.

With richer zest the banquet may be fraught,
A loftier theme may swell the exulting strain!
The lord of nations spoke,—and forth were brought
The spoils of Salem's devastated fane.

Thrice holy vessels!—pure from earthly stain,
And set apart, and sanctified to Him,
Who deign'd within the oracle to reign,
Reveal'd, yet shadow'd; making noonday dim,
To that most glorious cloud between the cherubim.

They came, and louder peal'd the voice of song,
And pride flash'd brighter from the kindling eye,
And He who sleeps not heard the elated throng,
In mirth that plays with thunderbolts, defy
The Rock of Zion!—Fill the nectar high,
High in the cups of consecrated gold!
And crown the bowl with garlands, ere they die,
And bid the censers of the temple hold
Offerings to Babel's gods, the mighty ones of old!

Peace!—is it but a phantom of the brain,
Thus shadow'd forth, the senses to appal,
Yon fearful vision?—Who shall gaze again
To search its cause?—Along the illumined wall,
Startling, yet riveting the eyes of all.
Darkly it moves,—a hand, a human hand,
O'er the bright lamps of that resplendent hall,
In silence tracing, as a mystic wand,
Words all unknown, the tongue of some far-distant land!

There are pale cheeks around the regal board,
And quivering limbs, and whispers deep and low,
And fitful starts!—the wine, in triumph pour'd,
Untasted foams, the song hath ceased to flow,

The waving censer drops to earth—and lo!
The king of men, the ruler, girt with mirth,
Trembles before a shadow!—Say not so!
—The child of dust, with guilt's foreboding sight,
Shrinks from the dread Unknown, the avenging
Infinite!

"But haste ye!—bring Chaldea's gifted seers,
The men of prescience!—haply to *their* eyes,
Which track the future through the rolling spheres,
Yon mystic sign may speak in prophecies."
They come—the readers of the midnight skies,
They that gave voice to visions—but in vain!
Still wrapt in clouds the awful secret lies,
It hath no language 'midst the starry train,
Earth has no gifted tongue Heaven's mysteries to
explain.

Then stood forth one, a child of other sires,
And other inspiration!—one of those
Who on the willows hung their captive lyres,
And sat, and wept, where Babel's river flows.
His eye was bright, and yet the pale repose
Of his pure features half o'eraw'd the mind,
Telling of inward mysteries—joys and woes
In lone recesses of the soul enshrined;
Depths of a being seal'd and sever'd from mankind.

Yes!—what was earth to him, whose spirit pass'd
Time's utmost bounds?—on whose unshrinking sight
Ten thousand shapes of burning glory cast
Their full resplendence?—Majesty and might

Were in his dreams;—for him the veil of light
Shrouding Heaven's inmost sanctuary and throne,
The curtain of th' unutterably bright
Was raised!—to him, in fearful splendour shown,
Ancient of Days! e'en Thou mad'st thy dread presence known.

He spoke:—the shadows of the things to come
Pass'd o'er his soul:—"O King, elate in pride!
God hath sent forth the writing of thy doom—
The one, the living, God by thee defied!
He, in whose balance earthly lords are tried,
Hath weigh'd, and found thee wanting. 'Tis decreed
The conqueror's hands thy kingdom shall divide,
The stranger to thy throne of power succeed!
Thy days are full—they come,—the Persian and the Mede!"

There fell a moment's thrilling silence round—
A breathless pause!—the hush of hearts that beat,
And limbs that quiver:—Is there not a sound,
A gathering cry, a tread of hurrying feet?
—'Twas but some echo in the crowded street,
Of far-heard revelry; the shout, the song,
The measured dance to music wildly sweet,
That speeds the stars their joyous course along—
Away; nor let a dream disturb the festal throng!

Peace yet again! Hark! steps in tumult flying,
Steeds rushing on, as o'er a battle-field!
The shouts of hosts exulting or defying,
The press of multitudes that strive or yield!

And the loud startling clash of spear and shield,
Sudden as earthquake's burst; and, blent with these,
The last wild shriek of those whose doom is seal'd
In their full mirth;—all deepening on the breeze,
As the long stormy roll of far-advancing seas!

And nearer yet the trumpet's blast is swelling,
Loud, shrill, and savage, drowning every cry;
And, lo! the spoiler in the regal dwelling,
Death—bursting on the halls of revelry!
Ere on their brows one fragile rose-leaf die,
The sword hath raged through joy's devoted train;
Ere one bright star be faded from the sky,
Red flames, like banners, wave from dome and fane;
Empire is lost and won—Belshazzar with the slain.[1]

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[1] As originally written, the following additional stanzas (afterwards omitted) concluded this poem:—

Fallen is the golden city!—in the dust,
Spoil'd of her crown, dismantled of her state,
She that hath made the strength of towers her trust,
Weeps by her dead, supremely desolate!
She that beheld the nations at her gate,
Thronging in homage, shall be call'd no more
Lady of kingdoms? Who shall mourn her fate?
Her guilt is full, her march of triumph o'er—
What widow'd land shall now *her* widowhood deplore?

Sit thou in silence! Thou that wert enthroned
On many waters!—thou, whose augurs read
The language of the planets, and disown'd
The Mighty Name it blazons!—veil thy head,
Daughter of Babylon!—the sword is red
From thy destroyer's harvest, and the yoke
Is on thee, O most proud!—for thou hast said,
"I am, and none beside!" Th' Eternal spoke:
Thy glory was a spoil, thine idol-gods were broke!

But go thou forth, O Israel!—wake! rejoice!
Be clothed with strength, as in thine ancient day!
Renew the sound of harps, th' exulting voice,
The mirth of timbrels!—loose the chain, and say
God hath redeem'd his people!—from decay
The silent and the trampled shall arise!
—Awake!—put on thy beautiful array,
O long-forsaken Zion!—To the skies
Send up on every wind thy choral melodies!

And lift thy head!—Behold thy sons returning,
Redeem'd from exile, ransom'd from the chain,
Light hath revisited the house of mourning;
She that on Judah's mountains wept in vain,
Because her children were not—dwells again,
Girt with the lovely!—through thy streets, once more
City of God! shall pass the Bridal train,
And the bright lamps their festive radiance pour,
And the triumphal hymns thy youth of joy restore!

THE

LAST CONSTANTINE.

. . . . . Thou strivest nobly,
When hearts of sterner stuff perhaps had sunk;
And o'er thy fall if it be so decreed,
Good men will mourn, and brave men will shed tears.
. . . . . .
. . . . . Fame I look not for,
But to sustain, in Heaven's all-seeing eye,
Before my fellow-men, in mine own sight,
With graceful virtue and becoming pride,
The dignity and honour of a man.
Thus station'd as I am, I will do all
That man may do.

Miss Baillie's *Constantine Palæologus.*

THE

LAST CONSTANTINE.

I.

The fires grew pale on Rome's deserted shrines,
In the dim grot the Pythia's voice had died
—Shout, for the City of the Constantines,
The rising City of the billow-side,
The City of the Cross!—great Ocean's bride,
Crown'd from her birth she sprung!—Long ages pass'd,
And still she look'd in glory o'er the tide,
Which at her feet Barbaric riches cast,
Pour'd by the burning East, all joyously and fast.

II.

Long ages past—they left her porphyry halls
Still trod by kingly footsteps. Gems and gold
Broider'd her mantle, and her castled walls
Frown'd in their strength; yet there were signs which told
The days were full. The pure high faith of old
Was changed; and on her silken couch of sleep
She lay, and murmur'd if a rose-leaf's fold

Disturb'd her dreams; and call'd her slaves to keep
Their watch, that no rude sound might reach her o'er the deep.

III.

But there are sounds that from the regal dwelling
Free hearts and fearless only may exclude;
'Tis not alone the wind at midnight swelling,
Breaks on the soft repose by Luxury woo'd!
There are unbidden footsteps, which intrude
Where the lamps glitter, and the wine-cup flows,
And darker hues have stain'd the marble, strew'd
With the fresh myrtle, and the short-lived rose,
And Parian walls have rung to the dread march of foes.

IV.

A voice of multitudes is on the breeze,
Remote, yet solemn as the night-storm's roar
Through Ida's giant pines! Across the seas
A murmur comes, like that the deep winds bore
From Tempe's haunted river to the shore
Of the reed-crown'd Eurotas; when, of old,
Dark Asia sent her battle-myriads o'er
Th' indignant wave which would not be controll'd,
But, past the Persian's chain, in boundless freedom roll'd.

V.

And it is thus again!—Swift oars are dashing
The parted waters, and a light is cast

On their white foam-wreaths, from the sudden flashing
Of Tartar spears, whose ranks are thickening fast.
There swells a savage trumpet on the blast,
A music of the deserts, wild and deep,
Wakening strange echoes as the shores are past,
Where low 'midst Ilion's dust her conquerors sleep,
O'ershadowing with high names each rude sepulchral heap.

VI.

War from the West!—the snows on Thracian hills
Are loosed by Spring's warm breath; yet o'er the lands
Which Hæmus girds, the chainless mountain rills
Pour down less swiftly than the Moslem bands.
War from the East!—'midst Araby's lone sands,
More lonely now the few bright founts may be,
While Ishmael's bow is bent in warrior-hands
Against the Golden City of the Sea; (1)
—Oh! for a soul to fire thy dust, Thermopylæ!

VII.

Hear yet again, ye mighty!—where are they,
Who, with their green Olympic garlands crown'd,
Leap'd up in proudly beautiful array,
As to a banquet gathering, at the sound
Of Persia's clarion?—far and joyous round,
From the pine-forests, and the mountain-snows,
And the low sylvan valleys, to the bound
Of the bright waves, at Freedom's voice they rose!
—Hath it no thrilling tone to break the tomb's repose?

VIII.

They slumber with their swords!—the olive shades
In vain are whispering their immortal tale!
In vain the spirit of the past pervades
The soft winds breathing through each Grecian vale.
—Yet must *thou* wake, though all unarm'd and pale,
Devoted City!—Lo! the Moslem's spear,
Red from its vintage, at thy gates; his sail
Upon thy waves, his trumpet in thine ear!
—Awake and summon those, who yet, perchance, may hear!

IX.

Be hush'd, thou faint and feeble voice of weeping!
Lift ye the banner of the Cross on high,
And call on chiefs whose noble sires are sleeping
In their proud graves of sainted chivalry,
Beneath the palms and cedars, where they sigh
To Syrian gales!—The sons of each brave line,
From their baronial halls shall hear your cry,
And seize the arms which flash'd round Salem's shrine,
And wield for you the swords once waved for Palestine!

X.

All still, all voiceless;—and the billow's roar
Alone replies!—Alike *their* soul is gone,
Who shared the funeral feast on Œta's shore,
And *theirs*, that o'er the field of Ascalon

Swell'd the crusader's hymn!—Then gird thou on
Thine armour, Eastern Queen! and meet the hour,
Which waits thee ere the day's fierce work is done,
With a strong heart; so may thy helmet tower
Unshiver'd through the storm, for generous hope is power!

XI.

But linger not,—array thy men of might!
The shores, the seas are peopled with thy foes.
Arms through thy cypress-groves are gleaming bright,
And the dark huntsmen of the wild repose
Beneath the shadowy marble porticoes
Of thy proud villas. Nearer and more near,
Around thy walls the sons of battle close;
Each hour, each moment, hath its sound of fear,
Which the deep grave alone is charter'd not to hear.

XII.

Away! bring wine, bring odours to the shade, (2)
Where the tall pine and poplar blend on high!
Bring roses, exquisite, but soon to fade!
Snatch every brief delight,—since we must die!—
Yet is the hour, degenerate Greeks! gone by,
For feast in vine-wreathed bower, or pillar'd hall;
Dim gleams the torch beneath yon fiery sky,
And deep and hollow is the tambour's call,
And from the startled hand th' untasted cup will fall.

XIII.

The night, the glorious oriental night,
Hath lost the silence of her purple heaven,
With its clear stars! The red artillery's light,
Athwart her worlds of tranquil splendour driven,
To the still firmament's expanse hath given
Its own fierce glare, wherein each cliff and tower
Starts wildly forth; and now the air is riven
With thunder-bursts, and now dull smoke-clouds lower,
Veiling the gentle moon, in her most hallow'd hour.

XIV.

Sounds from the waters, sounds upon the earth,
Sounds in the air, of battle! Yet with these
A voice is mingling, whose deep tones give birth
To Faith and Courage! From luxurious ease
A gallant few have started! O'er the seas,
From the Seven Towers, (3) their banner waves its sign,
And Hope is whispering in the joyous breeze,
Which plays amidst its folds. That voice was *thine;*
Thy soul was on that band, devoted Constantine.

XV.

Was Rome thy parent? Didst thou catch from *her*
The fire that lives in thine undaunted eye?
—That city of the throne and sepulchre
Hath given proud lessons how to reign and die!

Heir of the Cæsars! did that lineage high,
Which, as a triumph to the grave, hath pass'd
With its long march of sceptred imagery, (4)
Th' heroic mantle o'er thy spirit cast?
—Thou of an eagle-race the noblest and the last!

XVI.

Vain dreams! upon that spirit hath descended
Light from the living Fountain, whence each thought
Springs pure and holy! In that eye is blended
A spark, with Earth's triumphal memories fraught,
And far within, a deeper meaning, caught
From worlds unseen. A hope, a lofty trust,
Whose resting place on buoyant wing is sought,
(Though through its veil, seen darkly from the dust,)
In realms where Time no more hath power upon the just.

XVII.

Those were proud days, when on the battle-plain,
And in the sun's bright face, and 'midst the array
Of awe-struck hosts, and circled by the slain,
The Roman cast his glittering mail away, (5)
And while a silence, as of midnight, lay
O'er breathless thousands, as his voice who started,
Call'd on the unseen, terrific powers that sway
The heights, the depths, the shades; then fearless-hearted,
Girt on his robe of death, and for the grave departed.

XVIII.

But then, around him as the javelins rush'd,
From earth to heaven swell'd up the loud acclaim;
And, ere his heart's last free libation gush'd,
With a bright smile the warrior caught his name,
Far floating on the winds! And Victory came,
And made the hour of that immortal deed
A life in fiery feeling! Valour's aim
Had sought no loftier guerdon. Thus to bleed,
Was to be Rome's high star!—He died—and had his meed.

XIX.

But praise—and dearer, holier praise, be theirs,
Who, in the stillness and the solitude
Uncheer'd by Fame's proud hope, th' ethereal food
Of hearts press'd earthwards by a weight of cares,
Of restless energies, and only view'd
By Him whose eye, from his eternal throne,
Is on the soul's dark places; have subdued
And vow'd themselves, with strength till then unknown,
To some high martyr-task, in secret and alone.

XX.

Theirs be the bright and sacred names enshrined
Far in the bosom! for their deeds belong,
Not to the gorgeous faith which charm'd mankind
With its rich pomp of festival and song,
Garland and shrine, and incense-bearing throng;

But to that Spirit, hallowing, as it tries
Man's hidden soul in whispers, yet more strong
Than storm or earthquake's voice; for *thence* arise
All that mysterious world's unseen sublimities.

XXI.

Well might *thy* name, brave Constantine! awake
Such thought, such feeling!—But the scene again
Bursts on my vision, as the day-beams break
Through the red sulphurous mists! the camp, the plain,
The terraced palaces, the dome-capt fane,
With its bright cross fix'd high in crowning grace;
Spears on the ramparts, galleys on the main,
And, circling all with arms, that turban'd race,
The sun, the desert, stamp'd in each dark, haughty face.

XXII.

Shout, ye seven hills! Lo! Christian pennons streaming
Red o'er the waters! (6) Hail, deliverers, hail!
Along your billowy wake the radiance gleaming,
Is Hope's own smile! they crowd the swelling sail,
On, with the foam, the sun-beam, and the gale,
Borne, as a victor's car! The batteries pour
Their clouds and thunders; but the rolling veil
Of smoke floats up th' exulting winds before!
And oh! the glorious burst of that bright sea and shore!

XXIII.

The rocks, waves, ramparts, Europe's, Asia's coast,
All throng'd! one theatre for kingly war!
A monarch girt with his barbaric host,
Points o'er the beach his flashing scymetar!
Dark tribes are tossing javelins from afar,
Hands waving banners o'er each battlement,
Decks, with their serried guns, array'd to bar
The promised aid; but hark! a shout is sent
Up from the noble barks!—the Moslem line is rent;

XXIV.

On, on through rushing flame, and arrowy shower,
The welcome prows have cleft their rapid way,
And, with the shadows of the vesper-hour,
Furl'd their white sails, and anchor'd in the bay.
Then were the streets with song and torch-fire gay,
Then the Greek wines flow'd mantling in the light
Of festal halls;—and there was joy!—the ray
Of dying eyes, a moment wildly bright,
The sunset of the soul ere lost to mortal sight!

XXV.

For, vain that feeble succour! Day by day
Th' imperial towers are crumbling, and the sweep
Of the vast engines, in their ceaseless play,
Comes powerful as when Heaven unbinds the deep!
—Man's heart is mightier than the castled steep!
Yet will it sink when earthly hope is fled;
Man's thoughts work darkly in such hours, and sleep
Flies far; and in *their* mien, the walls who tread,
Things by the brave untold, may fearfully be read!

XXVI.

It was a sad and solemn task to hold
Their midnight-watch on that beleaguer'd wall!
As the sea-wave beneath the bastions roll'd,
A sound of fate was in its rise and fall!
The heavy clouds were as an empire's pall,
The giant-shadows of each tower and fane
Lay like the graves; a low, mysterious call
Breathed in the wind, and from the tented plain
A voice of omens rose, with each wild martial strain.

XXVII.

For they might catch the Arab charger's neighing,
The Thracian drum, the Tartar's drowsy song,
Might almost hear the soldan's banner swaying,
The watch-word mutter'd in some eastern tongue.
Then flash'd the gun's terrific light along
The marble streets, all stillness—not repose:
And boding thoughts came o'er them, dark and strong;
For heaven, earth, air, speak auguries to those
Who see their number'd hours fast pressing to the close.

XXVIII.

But strength is from the mightiest! There is one
Still in the breach and on the rampart seen,
Whose cheek grows paler with each morning sun,
And tells in silence how the night hath been,

In kingly halls, a vigil: yet serene,
And there is that in his collected mien,
To which the hearts of noble men reply,
With fires, partaking not this frame's mortality!

XXIX.

Yes! call it not of lofty minds the fate,
To pass o'er earth in brightness, but alone;
High power was made their birthright, to create
A thousand thoughts responsive to their own!
A thousand echoes of their spirit's tone
Start into life where'er their path may be,
Still following fast; as when the wind hath blown
O'er Indian groves, (7) a wanderer wild and free,
Kindling and bearing flames afar from tree to tree!

XXX.

And it is thus with thee! thy lot is cast
On evil days, thou Cæsar! yet the few
That set their generous bosoms to the blast
Which rocks thy throne—the fearless and the true,
Bear hearts wherein thy glance can still renew
The free devotion of the years gone by,
When from bright dreams th' ascendant Roman drew
Enduring strength!—states vanish—ages fly—
But leave one task unchanged—to suffer and to die!

XXXI.

These are our nature's heritage. But thou,
The crown'd with Empire! thou wert call'd to share

A cup more bitter. On thy fever'd brow
The semblance of that buoyant hope to wear,
Which long had pass'd away; alone to bear
The rush and pressure of dark thoughts, that came
As a strong billow in their weight of care;
And, with all this, to smile! for earth-born frame
These are stern conflicts, yet they pass, unknown to fame!

XXXII.

Her glance is on the triumph, on the field,
On the red scaffold; and where'er, in sight
Of human eyes, the human soul is steel'd
To deeds that seem as of immortal might,
Yet are proud nature's! But her meteor-light
Can pierce no depths, no clouds; it falls not where,
In silence, and in secret, and in night,
The noble heart doth wrestle with despair,
And rise more strong than death from its unwitness'd prayer.

XXXIII.

Men have been firm in battle: they have stood
With a prevailing hope on ravaged plains,
And won the birthright of their hearths with blood,
And died rejoicing, 'midst their ancient fanes,
That so their children, undefiled with chains,
Might worship there in peace. But they that stand
When not a beacon o'er the wave remains,
Link'd but to perish with a ruin'd land,
Where Freedom dies with them—call *these* a martyr-band!

XXXIV.

But the world heeds them not. Or if, perchance,
Upon their strife it bend a careless eye,
It is but as the Roman's stoic glance
Fell on that stage where man's last agony
Was made *his* sport, who, knowing *one* must die,
Reck'd not *which* champion; but prepared the strain,
And bound the bloody wreath of victory,
To greet the conqueror; while, with calm disdain,
The vanquish'd proudly met the doom he met in vain.

XXXV.

The hour of Fate comes on! and it is fraught
With *this* of Liberty, that now the need
Is past to veil the brow of anxious thought
And clothe the heart, which still beneath must bleed
With Hope's fair-seeming drapery. We are freed
From tasks like these by Misery; one alone
Is left the brave, and rest shall be thy meed,
Prince, watcher, wearied one! when thou hast shown
How brief the cloudy space which parts the grave and throne.

XXXVI.

The signs are full. They are not in the sky,
Nor in the many voices of the air,
Nor the swift clouds. No fiery hosts on high
Toss their wild spears; no meteor-banners glare,

No comet fiercely shakes its blazing hair,
And yet the signs are full: too truly seen
In the thinn'd ramparts, in the pale despair
Which lends one language to a people's mien,
And in the ruin'd heaps where walls and towers
have been!

XXXVII.

It is a night of beauty; such a night
As, from the sparry grot or laurel-shade,
Or wave in marbled cavern rippling bright,
Might woo the nymphs of Grecian fount and glade
To sport beneath its moonbeams, which pervade
Their forest haunts: a night, to rove alone,
Where the young leaves by vernal winds are
sway'd,
And the reeds whisper, with a dreamy tone
Of melody, that seems to breathe from worlds un-
known.

XXXVIII.

A night, to call from green Elysium's bowers
The shades of elder bards: a night, to hold
Unseen communion with th' inspiring powers
That made deep groves their dwelling-place of old;
A night for mourners, o'er the hallow'd mould,
To strew sweet flowers; for revellers to fill
And wreathe the cup; for sorrows to be told,
Which love hath cherish'd long;—vain thoughts!
be still!
—It is a night of fate, stamp'd with Almighty Will!

XXXIX.

It *should* come sweeping in the storm, and rending
The ancient summits in its dread career!
And with vast billows wrathfully contending,
And with dark clouds o'ershadowing every sphere!
—But He, whose footstep shakes the earth with fear,
Passing to lay the sovereign cities low,
Alike in His omnipotence is near,
When the soft winds o'er spring's green pathway blow,
And when His thunders cleave the monarch-mountain's brow.

XL.

The heavens in still magnificence look down
On the hush'd Bosphorus, whose ocean-stream
Sleeps, with its paler stars, the snowy crown
Of far Olympus, (8) in the moon-light gleam
Towers radiantly, as when the Pagan's dream
Throng'd it with gods, and bent the adoring knee
—But that is past—and now the One Supreme
Fills not alone *those* haunts; but earth, air, sea,
And time, which presses on, to finish his decree.

XLI.

Olympus, Ida, Delphi! ye, the thrones
And temples of a visionary might,
Brooding in clouds above your forest-zones,
And mantling thence the realms beneath with night:
Ye have look'd down on battles! Fear, and Flight,

And arm'd Revenge, all hurrying past below!
But there is yet a more appalling sight
For earth prepared, than e'er, with tranquil brow,
Ye gazed on from your world of solitude and snow!

XLII.

Last night a sound was in the Moslem camp,
And Asia's hills re-echoed to a cry
Of savage mirth! — Wild horn, and war-steeds' tramp,
Blent with the shout of barbarous revelry,
The clash of desert-spears! Last night the sky
A hue of menace and of wrath put on,
Caught from red watch-fires, blazing far and high,
And countless, as the flames, in ages gone,
Streaming to heaven's bright queen from shadowy Lebanon!

XLIII.

But all is stillness now. May this be sleep
Which wraps those eastern thousands? Yes, perchance
Along yon moonlight shore and dark-blue deep,
Bright are their visions with the Houri's glance,
And they behold the sparkling fountains dance
Beneath the bowers of paradise, that shed
Rich odours o'er the faithful; but the lance,
The bow, the spear, now round the slumberers spread,
Ere Fate fulfil such dreams, must rest beside the dead.

XLIV.

May this be sleep, this hush?—A sleepless eye
Doth hold its vigil 'midst that dusky race!
One that would scan th' abyss of destiny,
E'en now is gazing on the skies, to trace,
In those bright worlds, the burning isles of space,
Fate's mystic pathway: they the while, serene,
Walk in their beauty; but Mohammed's face
Kindles beneath their aspect, (9) and his mien,
All fired with stormy joy, by that soft light is seen.

XLV.

Oh! wild presumption of a conqueror's dream,
To gaze on those pure altar-fires, enshrined
In depths of blue infinitude, and deem
They shine to guide the spoiler of mankind
O'er fields of blood!—But with the restless mind
It hath been ever thus! and they that weep
For worlds to conquer, o'er the bounds assign'd
To human search, in daring pride would sweep,
As o'er the trampled dust wherein they soon must sleep.

XLVI.

But ye! that beam'd on Fate's tremendous night,
When the storm burst o'er golden Babylon,
And ye, that sparkled with your wonted light
O'er burning Salem, by the Roman won;
And ye, that calmly view'd the slaughter done
In Rome's own streets, when Alaric's trumpet-blast

Rung through the Capitol; bright spheres! roll on!
Still bright, though empires fall; and bid man cast
His humbled eyes to earth, and commune with the
past.

XLVII.

For it hath mighty lessons! from the tomb,
And from the ruins of the tomb, and where,
'Midst the wreck'd cities in the desert's gloom,
All tameless creatures make their savage lair,
Thence comes its voice, that shakes the midnight air,
And calls up clouds to dim the laughing day,
And thrills the soul;—yet bids us not despair,
But make one rock our shelter and our stay,
Beneath whose shade all else is passing to decay!

XLVIII.

The hours move on. I see a wavering gleam
O'er the hush'd waters tremulously fall,
Pour'd from the Cæsars' palace: now the beam
Of many lamps is brightening in the hall,
And from its long arcades and pillars tall,
Soft, graceful shadows undulating lie
On the wave's heaving bosom, and recall
A thought of Venice, with her moonlight sky,
And festal seas and domes, and fairy pageantry.

XLIX.

But from that dwelling floats no mirthful sound!
The swell of flute and Grecian lyre no more,
Wafting an atmosphere of music round,
Tells the hush'd seaman, gliding past the shore,

How monarchs revel there!—Its feasts are o'er—
Why gleam the lights along its colonnade?
—I see a train of guests in silence pour
Through its long avenues of terraced shade,
Whose stately founts and bowers for joy alone were made!

L.

In silence, and in arms! With helm—with sword—
These are no marriage-garments!—Yet e'en now
Thy nuptial feast should grace the regal board,
Thy Georgian bride should wreath her lovely brow
With an imperial diadem! (10)—but thou,
O fated prince! art call'd, and these with thee,
To darker scenes; and thou hast learn'd to bow
Thine Eastern sceptre to the dread decree,
And count it joy enough to perish—being free!

LI.

On through long vestibules, with solemn tread,
As men that in some time of fear and woe,
Bear darkly to their rest the noble dead,
O'er whom by day their sorrows may not flow,
The warriors pass: their measured steps are slow,
And hollow echoes fill the marble halls,
Whose long-drawn vistas open as they go,
In desolate pomp; and from the pictured walls,
Sad seems the light itself, which on their armour falls!

LII.

And they have reach'd a gorgeous chamber, bright
With all we dream of splendour; yet a gloom
Seems gather'd o'er it to the boding sight,
A shadow that anticipates the tomb!
Still from its fretted roof the lamps illume
A purple canopy, a golden throne;
But it is empty!—Hath the stroke of doom
Fallen there already?—Where is He, the One,
Born that high seat to fill, supremely and alone?

LIII.

Oh! there are times whose pressure doth efface
Earth's vain distinctions!—when the storm beats loud,
When the strong towers are tottering to their base,
And the streets rock,—who mingle in the crowd?
—Peasant and chief, the lowly and the proud,
Are in that throng!—Yes, life hath many an hour
Which makes us kindred, by one chastening bow'd,
And feeling but, as from the storm we cower,
What shrinking weakness feels before unbounded power!

LIV.

Yet then that Power, whose dwelling is on high,
Its loftiest marvels doth reveal, and speak
In the deep human heart more gloriously,
Than in the bursting thunder!—Thence the weak,
They that seem'd form'd, as flower-stems, but to break

With the first wind, have risen to deeds, whose name
Still calls up thoughts that mantle to the cheek,
And thrill the pulse!—Ay, strength no pangs could tame
Hath look'd from woman's eye upon the sword and flame!

LV.

And this is of such hours!—That throne is void,
And its lord comes, uncrown'd. Behold him stand,
With a calm brow, where woes have not destroy'd
The Greek's heroic beauty, 'midst his band,
The gather'd virtue of a sinking land,
Alas! how scanty!—Now is cast aside
All form of princely state! each noble hand
Is prest by turns in his: for earthly pride
There is no room in hearts where earthly hope hath died!

LVI.

A moment's hush—and then he speaks, he speaks!
But not of hope!—*that* dream hath long gone by:
His words are full of memory—as he seeks,
By the strong names of Rome and Liberty,
Which yet are living powers that fire the eye,
And rouse the heart of manhood; and by all
The sad yet grand remembrances that lie
Deep with earth's buried heroes; to recall
The soul of other years, if but to grace their fall!

LVII.

His words are full of faith!—And thoughts, more high
Than Rome e'er knew, now fill his glance with light;
Thoughts which give nobler lessons how to die
Than e'er were drawn from Nature's haughty might!
And to that eye, with all the spirit bright,
Have theirs replied in tears, which may not shame
The bravest in such moments!—'T is a sight
To make all earthly splendours cold and tame,
—That generous burst of soul, with its electric flame!

LVIII.

They weep—those champions of the cross—they weep,
Yet vow themselves to death!—Ay, 'midst that train
Are martyrs, privileged in tears to steep
Their lofty sacrifice!—The pang is vain,
And yet its gush of sorrow shall not stain
A warrior's sword.—Those men are strangers here (11)—
The homes, they never may behold again,
Lie far away, with all things blest and dear,
On laughing shores, to which their barks no more shall steer!

LIX.

Know'st thou the land where bloom the orange bowers? (12)
Where through dark foliage gleam the citron's dyes?
It is their own. They see their fathers' towers,
'Midst its Hesperian groves in sunlight rise:
They meet in soul, the bright Italian eyes,
Which long and vainly shall explore the main
For their white sail's return: the melodies
Of that sweet land are floating o'er their brain—
—Oh! what a crowded world one moment may contain!

LX.

Such moments come to thousands!—few may die
Amidst their native shades. The young, the brave,
The beautiful, whose gladdening voice and eye
Made summer in a parent's heart, and gave
Light to their peopled homes; o'er land and wave
Are scatter'd fast and far, as rose-leaves fall
From the deserted stem. They find a grave
Far from the shadow of th' ancestral hall,
A lonely bed is theirs, whose smiles were hope to all!

LXI.

But life flows on, and bears us with its tide,
Nor may we, lingering, by the slumberers dwell,
Though they were those once blooming at our side
In youth's gay home!—Away! what sound's deep swell

Comes on the wind?—It is an empire's knell,
Slow, sad, majestic, pealing through the night!
For the last time speaks forth the solemn bell,
Which calls the Christians to their holiest rite,
With a funereal voice of solitary might.

LXII.

Again, and yet again!—A startling power
In sounds like these lives ever; for they bear
Full on remembrance each eventful hour,
Chequering life's crowded path. They fill the air
When conquerors pass, and fearful cities wear
A mien like joy's; and when young brides are led
From their paternal homes; and when the glare
Of burning streets, on midnight's cloud, waves red,
And when the silent house receives its guest—the dead. (13)

LXIII.

But to those tones what thrilling soul was given,
On that last night of empire!—As a spell
Whereby the life-blood to its source is driven,
On the chill'd heart of multitudes they fell.
Each cadence seem'd a prophecy, to tell
Of sceptres passing from their line away,
An angel-watcher's long and sad farewell,
The requiem of a faith's departing sway,
A throne's, a nation's dirge, a wail for earth's decay

LXIV.

Again, and yet again!—from yon high dome,
Still the slow peal comes awfully; and they

Who never more to rest in mortal home
Shall throw the breastplate off at fall of day,
Th' imperial band in close and arm'd array,
As men that from the sword must part no more,
Take through the midnight streets their silent way,
Within their ancient temple to adore,
Ere yet its thousand years of Christian pomp are o'er.

LXV.

It is the hour of sleep: yet few the eyes
O'er which forgetfulness her balm hath shed,
In the beleagur'd city. Stillness lies
With moonlight, o'er the hills and waters spread,
But not the less with signs and sounds of dread,
The time speeds on. No voice is raised to greet
The last brave Constantine; and yet the tread
Of many steps is in the echoing street,
And pressure of pale crowds, scarce conscious why they meet.

LXVI.

Their homes are luxury's yet: why pour they thence
With a dim terror in each restless eye?
Hath the dread car, which bears the pestilence,
In darkness, with its heavy wheels, roll'd by,
And rock'd their palaces, as if on high
The whirlwind pass'd?—From couch and joyous board
Hath the fierce phantom beckon'd them to die?

—No!—what are these?—for them a cup is pour'd (14)
More dark with wrath;—*Man* comes—the spoiler and the sword.

LXVII.

Still as the monarch and his chieftains pass
Through those pale throngs, the streaming torch-light throws
On some wild form, amidst the living mass,
Hues deeply red, like lava's which disclose
What countless shapes are worn by mortal woes!
Lips bloodless, quivering limbs, hands clasp'd in prayer,
Starts, tremblings, hurryings, tears; all outward shows
Betokening inward agonies, were there:
Greeks! Romans! all but such as image brave despair!

LXVIII.

But high above that scene in bright repose,
And beauty borrowing from the torches' gleams
A mien of life, yet where no life-blood flows,
But all instinct with loftier being seems,
Pale, grand, colossal; lo! th' embodied dreams
Of yore!—Gods, heroes, bards, in marble wrought,
Look down, as powers, upon the wild extremes
Of mortal passion!—Yet 't was man that caught,
And in each glorious form enshrined immortal thought!

LXIX.

Stood ye not thus amidst the streets of Rome?
That Rome which witness'd in her sceptred days,
So much of noble death?—When shrine and dome,
'Midst clouds of incense, rung with choral lays,
As the long triumph pass'd with all its blaze
Of regal spoil, were ye not proudly borne,
Oh sovereign forms, concentering all the rays
Of the soul's lightnings?—did ye not adorn
The pomp which earth stood still to gaze on and to mourn?

LXX.

Hath it been thus?—Or did ye grace the halls,
Once peopled by the mighty?—Haply there,
In your still grandeur, from the pillar'd walls
Serene ye smiled on banquets of despair,
Where hopeless courage wrought itself to dare
The stroke of its deliverance, 'midst the glow
Of living wreaths, the sighs of perfumed air,
The sound of lyres, the flower-crown'd goblet's flow: (15)
—Behold again!—high hearts make nobler offerings now!

LXXI.

The stately fane is reach'd—and at its gate
The warriors pause; on life's tumultuous tide
A stillness falls, while he, whom regal state
Hath mark'd from all, to be more sternly tried

By suffering, speaks;—each ruder voice hath died,
While his implores forgiveness!—"If there be
One 'midst your throngs, my people!—whom in pride,
Or passion, I have wrong'd; such pardon, free
As mortals hope from Heaven, accord that man to me."

LXXII.

But all is silence; and a gush of tears
Alone replies!—He hath not been of those
Who, fear'd by many, pine in secret fears
Of all; th' environ'd but by slaves and foes,
To whom day brings not safety, night repose,
For they have *heard the voice cry, "sleep no more!"*
Of them he hath not been, nor such, as close
Their hearts to misery, till the time is o'er,
When it speaks low and kneels th' oppressor's throne before!

LXXIII.

He hath been loved—but who may trust the love
Of a degenerate race?—in other mould
Are cast the free and lofty hearts, that prove
Their faith through fiery trials,—yet behold,
And call him not forsaken,—thoughts untold
Have lent his aspect calmness, and his tread
Moves firmly to the shrine.—What pomps unfold
Within its precincts!—isles and seas have shed
Their gorgeous treasures there, around th' imperial dead!

LXXIV.

'Tis a proud vision—that most regal pile
Of ancient days!—the lamps are streaming bright
From its rich altar, down each pillar'd isle,
Whose vista fades in dimness; but the sight
Is lost in splendours, as the wavering light
Developes on those walls the thousand dyes
Of the vein'd marbles, which array their height,
And from yon dome, (16) the lode-star of all eyes,
Pour such an iris-glow as emulates the skies.

LXXV.

But gaze thou not on these; though heaven's own hues
In their soft clouds and radiant tracery vie;
Though tints, of sun-burnt glory, may suffuse
Arch, column, rich mosaic: pass thou by
The stately tombs, where eastern Cæsars lie,
Beneath their trophies; pause not here, for know,
A deeper source of all sublimity
Lives in man's bosom, than the world can show
In nature or in art, above, around, below.

LXXVI.

Turn thou to mark (though tears may dim thy gaze)
The steel-clad group before yon altar-stone;
Heed not though gems and gold around it blaze,
Those heads unhelm'd, those kneeling forms alone,
Thus bow'd, look glorious here. The light is thrown
Full from the shrine on one, a nation's lord,

A sufferer!—but his task shall soon be done—
E'en now, as Faith's mysterious cup is pour'd,
See to that noble brow, peace, not of earth, restored!

LXXVII.

The rite is o'er. The band of brethren part,
Once—and *but* once—to meet on earth again!
Each in the strength of a collected heart,
To dare what man may dare—and know 'tis vain!
The rite is o'er, and thou, majestic fane!
The glory is departed from thy brow!
Be clothed with dust!—the Christian's farewell strain
Hath died within thy walls; thy Cross must bow,
Thy kingly tombs be spoil'd; thy golden shrines laid low!

LXXVIII.

The streets grow still and lonely—and the star,
The last bright lingerer in the path of morn,
Gleams faint; and in the very lap of war,
As if young Hope with Twilight's rays were born,
Awhile the city sleeps!—her throngs, o'erworn
With fears and watchings, to their homes retire;
Nor is the balmy air of day-spring torn
With battle sounds; (17) the winds in sighs expire,
And Quiet broods in mists, that veil the sunbeam's fire.

LXXIX.

The city sleeps!—ay! on the combat's eve,
And by the scaffold's brink, and 'midst the swell

Of angry seas, hath Nature won reprieve
Thus from her cares. The brave have slumber'd well,
And e'en the fearful, in their dungeon-cell,
Chain'd between Life and Death!—Such rest be thine,
For conflicts wait thee still!—Yet who can tell
In that brief hour, how much of Heaven may shine
Full on thy spirit's dream!—Sleep, weary Constantine!

LXXX.

Doth the blast rise?—the clouded East is red,
As if a storm were gathering; and I hear
What seems like heavy rain-drops, or the tread,
The soft and smother'd step, of those that fear
Surprise from ambush'd foes. Hark! yet more near
It comes, a many-toned and mingled sound;
A rustling, as of winds where boughs are sere,
A rolling as of wheels that shake the ground
From far; a heavy rush, like seas that burst their bound!

LXXXI.

Wake, wake! They come from sea and shore, ascending
In hosts your ramparts! Arm ye for the day!
Who now may sleep amidst the thunders, rending
Through tower and wall, a path for their array?
Hark! how the trumpet cheers them to the prey,
With its wild voice to which the seas reply!

And the earth rocks beneath their engines' sway,
And the far hills repeat their battle-cry,
Till that fierce tumult seems to shake the vaulted sky!

LXXXII.

They fail not now, the generous band, that long
Have ranged their swords around a falling throne;
Still in those fearless men the walls are strong,
Hearts, such as rescue empires, are their own!
Shall those high energies be vainly shown?
No! from their towers th' invading tide is driven
Back, like the Red-Sea waves, when God had blown
With his strong winds! (18) — the dark-brow'd ranks are riven —
Shout, warriors of the cross! — for victory is of Heaven!

LXXXIII.

Stand firm! — Again the crescent host is rushing,
And the waves foam, as on the galleys sweep,
With all their fires and darts, though blood is gushing
Fast o'er their sides, as rivers to the deep.
Stand firm! — there yet is hope — th' ascent is steep,
And from on high no shaft descends in vain;
— But those that fall swell up the mangled heap,
In the red moat, the dying and the slain,
And o'er that fearful bridge th' assailants mount again!

LXXXIV.

Oh! the dread mingling, in that awful hour,
Of all terrific sounds!—the savage tone
Of the wild horn, the cannon's peal, the shower
Of hissing darts, the crash of walls o'erthrown,
The deep, dull tambour's beat!—man's voice alone
Is there unheard! Ye may not catch the cry
Of trampled thousands—prayer, and shriek, and moan,
All drown'd, as that fierce hurricane sweeps by,
But swell the unheeded sum earth pays for victory!

LXXXV.

War-clouds have wrapt the city!—through their dun
O'erloaded canopy, at times a blaze,
As of an angry storm-presaging sun,
From the Greek fire shoots up; (19) and lightning rays
Flash, from the shock of sabres, through the haze,
And glancing arrows cleave the dusky air!
—Ay! *this* is in the compass of our gaze,—
But fearful things, unknown, untold, are there,
Workings of Wrath, and Death, and Anguish, and Despair!

LXXXVI.

Woe, shame and woe!—A chief, a warrior flies,
A red-cross champion, bleeding, wild, and pale!
—Oh God! that nature's passing agonies
Thus o'er the spark which dies not should prevail!
Yes! rend the arrow from thy shatter'd mail,

And stanch the blood-drops, Genoa's fallen son! (20)
Fly swifter yet! the javelins pour as hail!
—But there are tortures which thou canst not shun,
The spirit is *their* prey;—thy pangs are but begun!

LXXXVII.

Oh! happy in their homes, the noble dead!
The seal is set on their majestic fame;
Earth has drunk deep the generous blood they shed,
Fate has no power to dim their stainless name:
They may not, in one bitter moment, shame
Long glorious years; from many a lofty stem
Fall graceful flowers, and eagle-hearts grow tame,
And stars drop, fading, from the diadem;
But the bright *past* is theirs—there is no change for *them!*

LXXXVIII.

Where art thou, Constantine?—Where Death is reaping
His sevenfold harvest! Where the stormy light,
Fast as th' artillery's thunderbolts are sweeping,
Throws meteor-bursts o'er battle's noonday-night?
Where the towers rock and crumble from their height,
As to the earthquake, and the engines ply
Like red Vesuvio; and where human might
Confronts all this, and still brave hearts beat high,
While scymetars ring loud on shivering panoply.

LXXXIX.

Where art thou, Constantine? — Where Christian
blood
Hath bathed the walls in torrents, and in vain!
Where Faith and Valour perish in the flood,
Whose billows, rising o'er their bosoms, gain
Dark strength each moment: where the gallant
slain
Around the banner of the cross lie strew'd,
Thick as the vine-leaves on the autumnal plain;
Where all, save one high spirit, is subdued,
And through the breach press on the o'erwhelming
multitude.

XC.

Now is he battling 'midst a host alone,
As the last cedar stems awhile the sway
Of mountain-storms, whose fury hath o'erthrown
Its forest-brethren in their green array!
And he hath cast his purple robe away,
With its imperial bearings; that his sword
An iron ransom from the chain may pay,
And win, what haply Fate may yet accord,
A soldier's death, the all now left an empire's lord!

XCI.

Search for him now, where bloodiest lie the files
Which once were men, the faithful and the brave!
Search for him now, where loftiest rise the piles
Of shatter'd helms and shields, which could not
save;

And crests and banners, never more to wave
In the free winds of heaven!—He is of those
O'er whom the host may rush, the tempest rave,
And the steeds trample, and the spearmen close,
Yet wake them not!—so deep their long and last repose!

XCII.

Woe to the vanquished! thus it hath been still,
Since Time's first march!—Hark, hark, a people's cry!
Ay! now the conquerors in the streets fulfil
Their task of wrath! In vain the victims fly;
Hark! now each piercing tone of agony
Blends in the city's shriek!—The lot is cast.
Slaves, 'twas your *choice*, thus, rather thus, to die,
Than where the warrior's blood flows warm and fast,
And roused and mighty hearts beat proudly to the last!

XCIII.

Oh! well doth freedom battle!—Men have made,
E'en 'midst their blazing roofs, a noble stand,
And on the floors, where once their children play'd,
And by the hearths, round which their household band
At evening met; ay! struggling hand to hand,
Within the very chambers of their sleep,
There have they taught the spoilers of the land,
In chainless hearts what fiery strength lies deep,
To guard free homes!—but ye! kneel, tremblers! kneel and weep!

XCIV.

'Tis eve—the storm hath died—the valiant rest
Low on their shields; the day's fierce work is done,
And blood-stain'd seas and burning towers attest
Its fearful deeds. An empire's race is run!
Sad, 'midst his glory, looks the parting sun
Upon the captive city. Hark! a swell
(Meet to proclaim Barbaric war-fields won)
Of fierce triumphal sounds, that wildly tell,
The Soldan comes within the Cæsars' halls to dwell!

XCV.

Yes! with the peal of cymbal and of gong,
He comes, the Moslem treads those ancient halls!
But all is stillness there, as Death had long
Been lord alone within those gorgeous walls.
And half that silence of the grave appals
The conqueror's heart. Ay, thus with Triumph's hour,
Still comes the boding whisper, which recalls
A thought of those impervious clouds that lower
O'er Grandeur's path, a sense of some far mightier Power!

XCVI.

"The owl upon Afrasiab's towers hath sung
Her watch-song, and around th' imperial throne
The spider weaves his web!" (21) Still darkly hung
That verse of omen, as a prophet's tone,
O'er his flush'd spirit. Years on years have flown

To prove its truth: kings pile their domes in air,
That the coil'd snake may bask on sculptured stone,
And nations clear the forests, to prepare
For the wild fox and wolf more stately dwellings there!

XCVII.

But thou! that on thy ramparts proudly dying,
As a crown'd leader in such hours should die,
Upon the pyre of shiver'd spears art lying,
With the heavens o'er thee for a canopy,
And banners for thy shroud!—No tear, no sigh,
Shall mingle with thy dirge; for thou art now
Beyond vicissitude! Lo! rear'd on high,
The Crescent blazes, while the Cross must bow;
But where no change can reach, there, Constantine, art thou!

XCVIII.

"After life's fitful fever, thou sleep'st well!"
We may not mourn thee!—Sceptred chiefs, from whom
The earth received her destiny, and fell
Before them trembling—to a sterner doom
Have oft been call'd. For them the dungeon's gloom,
With its cold starless midnight, hath been made
More fearful darkness, where, as in a tomb,
Without a tomb's repose, the chain hath weigh'd
Their very soul to dust, with each high power decay'd.

XCIX.

Or in the eye of thousands they have stood,
To meet the stroke of Death—but not like thee!
From bonds and scaffolds hath appeal'd *their* blood,
But thou didst fall unfetter'd, arm'd, and free,
And kingly to the last!—And if it be
That, from the viewless world, whose marvels none
Return to tell, a spirit's eye can see
The things of earth; still may'st thou hail the sun,
Which o'er thy land shall dawn, when Freedom's fight is won!

C.

And the hour comes, in storm!—A light is glancing
Far through the forest-god's Arcadian shades
—'Tis not the moonbeam, tremulously dancing,
Where lone Alpheus bathes his haunted glades;
A murmur, gathering power, the air pervades,
Round dark Cithæron, and by Delphi's steep;
—'Tis not the song and lyre of Grecian maids,
Nor pastoral reed that lulls the vales to sleep,
Nor yet the rustling pines, nor yet the sounding deep!

CI.

Arms glitter on the mountains, which, of old,
Awoke to freedom's first heroic strain,
And by the streams, once crimson as they roll'd
The Persian helm and standard to the main;

And the blue waves of Salamis again
Thrill to the trumpet; and the tombs reply
With their ten thousand echoes, from each plain,
Far as Platæa's, where the mighty lie,
Who crown'd so proudly there the bowl of liberty! (22)

CII.

Bright land with glory mantled o'er by song!
Land of the vision-peopled hills and streams,
And fountains, whose deserted banks along,
Still the soft air with inspiration teems;
Land of the graves, whose dwellers shall be themes
To verse for ever; and of ruin'd shrines
That scarce look desolate beneath such beams,
As bathe in gold thine ancient rocks and pines!
—When shall thy sons repose in peace beneath their vines?

CIII.

Thou wert not made for bonds, nor shame, nor fear!
—Do the hoar oaks and dark-green laurels wave
O'er Mantinæa's earth?—doth Pindus rear
His snows, the sunbeam and the storm to brave?
And is there yet on Marathon a grave?
And doth Eurotas lead his silvery line
By Sparta's ruins?—And shall man, a slave,
Bow'd to the dust, amid such scenes repine?
—If e'er a soil was mark'd for Freedom's step—'tis thine!

CIV.

Wash from that soil the stains, with battle-showers!
—Beneath Sophia's dome the Moslem prays,
The Crescent gleams amidst the olive-bowers,
In the Comneni's halls (23) the Tartar sways:
But not for long!—the spirit of those days,
When the three hundred made their funeral pile
Of Asia's dead, is kindling, like the rays
Of thy rejoicing sun, when first his smile
Warms the Parnassian rock, and gilds the Delian isle.

CV.

If then 'tis given thee to arise in might,
Trampling the scourge, and dashing down the chain,
Pure be thy triumphs, as thy name is bright!
The cross of victory should not know a stain!
So may that faith once more supremely reign,
Through which we lift our spirits from the dust!
And deem not, e'en when virtue dies in vain,
She dies forsaken; but repose our trust
On Him whose ways are dark, unsearchable—but just.

NOTES.

Note 1.

While Ishmael's bow, &c.

The army of Mahomet the Second, at the siege of Constantinople, was thronged with fanatics of all sects and nations, who were not enrolled amongst the regular troops. The Sultan himself marched upon the city from Adrianople; but his army must have been principally collected in the Asiatic provinces, which he had previously visited.

Note 2.

——*Bring wine, bring odours, &c.*

Huc vina, et unguenta, et nimium breves
Flores amœnæ ferre jube rosæ.

Hor. lib. ii. od. 3.

Note 3.

From the Seven Towers, &c.

The Castle of the Seven Towers is mentioned in the Byzantine history, as early as the sixth century of the Christian era, as an edifice which contributed materially to the defence of Constantinople; and it was the principal bulwark of the town on the coast of the Propontis, in the latter periods of the empire. For a description of this building, see *Pouqueville's Travels.*

Note 4.

With its long march of sceptred imagery.

An allusion to the Roman custom of carrying in procession, at the funerals of their great men, the images of their ancestors.

Note 5.

The Roman cast his glittering mail away.

The following was the ceremony of consecration with which Decius devoted himself in battle. He was ordered by Valerius, the pontifex maximus, to quit his military habit, and put on the robe he wore in the senate. Valerius then covered his head with a veil; commanded him to put forth his hand under his robe tc his chin, and standing with both feet upon a javelin, to repeat these words: "O Janus, Jupiter, Mars, Romulus, Bellona, and ye Lares and Novensiles! All ye heroes who dwell in heaven, and all ye gods who rule over us and our enemies, especially ye gods of hell! I honour you, invoke you, and humbly entreat you to prosper the arms of the Romans, and to transfer all fear and terror from them to their enemies; and I do, for the safety of the Roman people, and their legions, devote myself, and with myself the army and auxiliaries of the enemy, to the infernal gods, and the goddess of the earth." Decius then, girding his robe around him, mounted his horse, and rode full speed into the thickest of the enemy's battalions. The Latins were, for a while, thunderstruck at this spectacle; but at length recovering themselves, they discharged a shower of darts, under which the consul fell.

Note 6.

——Lo! Christian pennons streaming
Red o'er the waters! &c.

See Gibbon's animated description of the arrival of five Christian ships, with men and provisions, for the succour of the besieged, not many days before the fall of Constantinople. ——*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. xii. p. 215.

Note 7.

——As when the wind hath blown
O'er Indian groves, &c.

The summits of the lofty rocks in the Carnatic, particularly about the Ghauts, are sometimes covered with the bamboo tree, which grows in thick clumps, and is of such uncommon aridity,

that in the sultry season of the year the friction occasioned by a strong dry wind will literally produce sparks of fire, which frequently setting the woods in a blaze, exhibit to the spectator stationed in a valley surrounded by rocks, a magnificent, though imperfect circle of fire. —— *Notes to Kindersley's Specimens of Hindoo Literature.*

Note 8.

——The snowy crown
Of far Olympus, &c.

Those who steer their westward course through the middle of the Propontis may at once descry the high lands of Thrace and Bithynia, and never lose sight of the lofty summit of Mount Olympus, covered with eternal snows.——*Decline and Fall, &c.* vol. iii. p. 8.

Note 9.

——Mohammed's face
Kindles beneath their aspect, &c.

Mahomet II. was greatly addicted to the study of astrology. His calculations in this science led him to fix upon the morning of the 29th of May as the fortunate hour for a general attack upon the city.

Note 10.

Thy Georgian bride, &c.

Constantine Palæologus was betrothed to a Georgian princess; and the very spring which witnessed the fall of Constantinople had been fixed upon as the time for conveying the imperial bride to that city.

Note 11.

Those men are strangers here.

Many of the adherents of Constantine, in his last noble stand for the liberties, or rather the honour, of a falling empire, were foreigners and chiefly Italians.

Note 12.

Know'st thou the land, &c.

This and the next line are an almost literal translation from a beautiful song of Goethe's:

Kennst du das land, wo die zitronen bluhn
Mit dunkeln laub die gold orangen gluhn? &c.

Note 13.

The idea expressed in this stanza is beautifully amplified in Schiller's poem "Das Lied der Glocke."

Note 14.

Hath the fierce phantom, &c.

It is said to be a Greek superstition that the plague is announced by the heavy rolling of an invisible chariot, heard in the streets at midnight; and also by the appearance of a gigantic spectre, who summons the devoted person by name.

Note 15.

———*Ye smiled on banquets of despair, &c.*

Many instances of such banquets, given and shared by persons resolved upon death, might be adduced from ancient history. That of Vibius Virius, at Capua, is amongst the most memorable.

Note 16.

———*Yon dome, the lode-star of all eyes.*

For a minute description of the marbles, jaspers, and porphyries, employed in the construction of St. Sophia, see *The Decline and Fall, &c.* vol. vii. p. 120.

Note 17.

Nor is the balmy air of day-spring torn
With battle-sounds, &c.

The assault of the city took place at day-break, and the Turks were strictly enjoined to advance in silence, which had also been

commanded, on pain of death, during the preceding night. This circumstance is finely alluded to by Miss Baillie, in her tragedy of Constantine Palæologus;

> "Silent shall be the march: nor drum, nor trump,
> Nor clash of arms, shall to the watchful foe
> Our near approach betray: silent and soft,
> As the pard's velvet foot on Libya's sands,
> Slow stealing with crouch'd shoulders on her prey."
>
> *Constantine Palæologus*, Act iv.

"The march and labour of thousands" must, however, as Gibbon observes, "have inevitably produced a strange confusion of discordant clamours; which reached the ears of the watchmen on the towers."

Note 18.

———*The dark-browed ranks are riven.*

"After a conflict of two hours, the Greeks still maintained and preserved their advantage," says Gibbon. The strenuous exertions of the Janizaries first turned the fortune of the day.

Note 19.

From the Greek fire shoots up, &c.

"A circumstance that distinguishes the siege of Constantinople is the reunion of the ancient and modern artillery. The bullet and the battering-ram were directed against the same wall; nor had the discovery of gunpowder superseded the use of the liquid and unextinguishable fire." —— *Decline and Fall, &c.*, vol. xii. p. 213.

Note 20.

And stanch the blood-drops, Genoa's fallen son!

"The immediate loss of Constantinople may be ascribed to the bullet, or arrow, which pierced the gauntlet of John Justiniana (a Genoese chief.) The sight of his blood, and exquisite pain, appalled the courage of the chief, whose arms and counsels were the firmest rampart of the city." —— *Decline and Fall, &c.*, vol. xii. p. 229.

Note 21.

The owl upon Afrasiab's towers hath sung
Her watch-song, &c.

Mahomet II., on entering, after his victory, the palace of the Byzantine emperors, was strongly impressed with the silence and desolation which reigned within its precincts. "A melancholy reflection on the vicissitudes of human greatness forced itself on his mind, and he repeated an elegant distich of Persian poetry: 'The spider has wove his web in the imperial palace, and the owl hath sung her watch-song on the towers of Afrasiab.'" —— *Decline and Fall, &c.*, vol. xii. p. 240.

Note 22.

———*The bowl of liberty.*

One of the ceremonies by which the battle of Platæa was annnually commemorated was, to crown with wine a cup called the *Bowl of Liberty*, which was afterwards poured forth in libation.

Note 23.

In the Comneni's halls, &c.

The Comneni were amongst the most distinguished of the families who filled the Byzantine throne in the declining years of the eastern empire.

GREEK SONGS.

I.—THE STORM OF DELPHI.[1]

Far through the Delphian shades
An Eastern trumpet rung!
And the startled eagle rush'd on high,
With a sounding flight through the fiery sky;
And banners, o'er the shadowy glades,
To the sweeping winds were flung.

Banners, with deep-red gold
All waving as a flame,
And a fitful glance from the bright spear-head
On the dim wood-paths of the mountain shed,
And a peal of Asia's war-notes, told
That in arms the Persian came.

He came with starry gems
On his quiver and his crest;
With starry gems, at whose heart the day
Of the cloudless orient burning lay,
And they cast a gleam on the laurel-stems,
As onward his thousands press'd.

[1] See the account cited from Herodotus, in Mitford's *Greece.*

But a gloom fell o'er their way,
And a heavy moan went by!
A moan, yet not like the wind's low swell,
When its voice grows wild amidst cave and dell,
But a mortal murmur of dismay,
Or a warrior's dying sigh!

A gloom fell o'er their way!
'T was not the shadow cast
By the dark pine boughs, as they cross'd the blue
Of the Grecian heavens with their solemn hue;—
The air was fill'd with a mightier sway—
But on the spearmen pass'd!

And hollow to their tread,
Came the echoes of the ground,
And banners droop'd, as with dews o'erborne,
And the wailing blast of the battle-horn
Had an alter'd cadence, dull and dead,
Of strange foreboding sound.

But they blew a louder strain,
When the steep defiles were pass'd!
And afar the crown'd Parnassus rose,
To shine through heaven with his radiant snows,
And in golden light the Delphian fane
Before them stood at last!

In golden light it stood,
'Midst the laurels gleaming lone,
For the Sun-god yet, with a lovely smile,
O'er its graceful pillars look'd awhile,
Though the stormy shade on cliff and wood
Grew deep round its mountain-throne.

And the Persians gave a shout!
But the marble-walls replied,
With a clash of steel and a sullen roar
Like heavy wheels on the ocean-shore,
And a savage trumpet's note peal'd out,
Till their hearts for terror died!

On the armour of the god,
Then a viewless hand was laid;
There were helm and spear, with a clanging din
And corslet brought from the shrine within,
From the inmost shrine of the dread abode,
And before its front array'd.

And a sudden silence fell
Through the dim and loaded air!
On the wild-bird's wing, and the myrtle spray,
And the very founts, in their silvery way,
With a weight of sleep came down the spell,
Till man grew breathless there.

But the pause was broken soon!
'Twas not by song or lyre;
For the Delphian maids had left their bowers,
And the hearths were lone in the city's towers,
But there burst a sound through the misty noon—
That battle-noon of fire!

It burst from earth and heaven!
It roll'd from crag and cloud!
For a moment of the mountain blast,
With a thousand stormy voices pass'd,
And the purple gloom of the sky was riven,
When the thunder peal'd aloud.

And the lightnings in their play
Flash'd forth, like javelins thrown;
Like sun-darts wing'd from the silver bow,
They smote the spear and the turban'd brow,
And the bright gems flew from the crests like spray,
And the banners were struck down!

And the massy oak-boughs crash'd
To the fire-bolts from on high,
And the forest lent its billowy roar,
While the glorious tempest onward bore,
And lit the streams, as they foam'd and dash'd,
With the fierce rain sweeping by.

Then rush'd the Delphian men
On the pale and scatter'd host;
Like the joyous burst of a flashing wave,
They rush'd from the dim Corycian cave,
And the singing blast o'er wood and glen
Roll'd on, with the spears they toss'd.

There were cries of wild dismay,
There were shouts of warrior-glee,
There were savage sounds of the tempest's mirth,
That shook the realm of their eagle-birth;
But the mount of song, when they died away,
Still rose, with its temple, free!

And the Pæan swell'd erelong,
Io Pæan! from the fane;
Io Pæan! for the war-array,
On the crown'd Parnassus riven that day!
—Thou shalt rise *as* free, thou mount of song!
With thy bounding streams again.

II.—THE BOWL OF LIBERTY.[1]

Before the fiery sun,
The sun that looks on Greece with cloudless eye,
In the free air, and on the war-field won,
Our fathers crown'd the Bowl of Liberty.

Amidst the tombs they stood,
The tombs of heroes! with the solemn skies,
And the wide plain around, where patriot-blood
Had steep'd the soil in hues of sacrifice.

They call'd the glorious dead,
In the strong faith which brings the viewless nigh,
And pour'd rich odours o'er their battle-bed,
And bade them to their rite of Liberty.

They call'd them from the shades,
The golden-fruited shades, where minstrels tell
How softer light th' immortal clime pervades,
And music floats o'er meads of asphodel.

Then fast the bright-red wine[2]
Flow'd to *their* manes who taught the world to die,
And made the land's green turf a living shrine,
Meet for the wreath and Bowl of Liberty.

---

[1] This and the following piece appeared originally in the *New Monthly Magazine.*

[2] For an account of this ceremony, anciently performed in commemoration of the battle of Platæa, see Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, vol. i. p. 389.

So the rejoicing earth
Took from her vines again the blood she gave,
And richer flowers to deck the tomb drew birth
From the free soil thus hallow'd to the brave.

We have the battle-fields,
The tombs, the names, the blue majestic sky,
We have the founts the purple vintage yields;
—When shall *we* crown the Bowl of Liberty?

III.—THE VOICE OF SCIO.

A voice from Scio's isle—
A voice of song, a voice of old
Swept far as cloud or billow roll'd,
And earth was hush'd the while—

The souls of nations woke!
Where lies the land whose hills among,
That Voice of Victory hath not rung,
As if a trumpet spoke?

To sky, and sea, and shore,
Of those whose blood, on Ilion's plain,
Swept from the rivers to the main,
A glorious tale it bore.

Still, by our sun-bright deep,
With all the fame that fiery lay
Threw round them, in its rushing way,
The sons of battle sleep.

And kings their turf have crown'd!
And pilgrims o'er the foaming wave
Brought garlands there: so rest the brave,
Who thus their bard have found!

A voice from Scio's isle,
A voice as deep hath risen again
As far shall peal its thrilling strain,
Where'er our sun may smile!

Let not its tones expire!
Such power to waken earth and heaven
And might and vengeance, ne'er was given
To mortal song or lyre!

Know ye not whence it comes?
From ruin'd hearths, from burning fanes,
From kindred blood on yon red plains,
From desolated homes!

'Tis with us through the night!
'Tis on our hills, 'tis in our sky—
Hear it, ye heavens! when swords flash high,
O'er the mid-waves of fight!

IV.—THE SPARTAN'S MARCH.[1]

"The Spartans used not the trumpet in their march into battle," says Thucydides, "because they wished not to excite the rage of their warriors. Their charging-step was made to the 'Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders.' The valour of a Spartan was too highly tempered to require a stunning or a rousing impulse. His spirit was like a steed too proud for the spur." —— CAMPBELL *on the Elegiac Poetry of the Greeks.*

'Twas morn upon the Grecian hills,
Where peasants dress'd the vines;
Sunlight was on Cithæron's rills,
Arcadia's rocks and pines.

And brightly, through his reeds and flowers,
Eurotas wander'd by,
When a sound arose from Sparta's towers
Of solemn harmony.

Was it the hunters' choral strain
To the woodland-goddess pour'd?
Did virgin hands in Pallas' fane
Strike the full sounding chord?

But helms were glancing on the stream,
Spears ranged in close array,
And shields flung back a glorious beam
To the morn of a fearful day!

---

[1] Originally published in the *Edinburgh Magazine.*

And the mountain-echoes of the land
Swell'd through the deep-blue sky;
While to soft strains moved forth a band
Of men that moved to die.

They march'd not with the trumpet's blast,
Nor bade the horn peal out,
And the laurel groves, as on they pass'd,
Rung with no battle shout!

They ask'd no clarion's voice to fire
Their souls with an impulse high;
But the Dorian reed and the Spartan lyre
For the sons of liberty!

And still sweet flutes, their path around
Sent forth Æolian breath;
They needed not a sterner sound
To marshal them for death!

So moved they calmly to their field,
Thence never to return,
Save bearing back the Spartan shield,
Or on it proudly borne!

V.—THE URN AND SWORD.

They sought for treasures in the tomb,
Where gentler hands were wont to spread
Fresh boughs and flowers of purple bloom,
And sunny ringlets, for the dead.[1]

[1] See Potter's *Grecian Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 234.

They scatter'd far the greensward heap,
Where once those hands the bright wine pour'd;
—What found they in the home of sleep?—
A mouldering urn, a shiver'd sword!

An urn, which held the dust of one
Who died when hearths and shrines were free;
A sword, whose work was proudly done
Between our mountains and the sea.

And these are treasures!—undismay'd,
Still for the suffering land we trust,
Wherein the past its fame hath laid,
With freedom's sword, and valour's dust.

VI.—THE MYRTLE BOUGH.

Still green, along our sunny shore,
The flowering myrtle waves,
As when its fragrant boughs of yore
Were offer'd on the graves—
The graves, wherein our mighty men
Had rest, unviolated then.

Still green it waves! as when the hearth
Was sacred through the land;
And fearless was the banquet's mirth,
And free the minstrel's hand;
And guests, with shining myrtle crown'd,
Sent the wreathed lyre and wine-cup round.

Still green! as when on holy ground
The tyrant's blood was pour'd:
Forget ye not what garlands bound
The young deliverer's sword!
Though earth may shroud Harmodius now,
We still have sword and myrtle bough!

ELYSIUM.

"In the Elysium of the ancients, we find none but heroes and persons who had either been fortunate or distinguished on earth; the children, and apparently the slaves and lower classes, that is to say, Poverty, Misfortune, and Innocence, were banished to the infernal Regions."——CHATEAUBRIAND, *Génie du Christianisme.*

FAIR wert thou in the dreams
Of elder time, thou land of glorious flowers
And summer winds and low-toned silvery streams,
Dim with the shadows of thy laurel bowers,
Where, as they pass'd, bright hours
Left no faint sense of parting, such as clings
To earthly love, and joy in loveliest things!

Fair wert thou, with the light
On thy blue hills and sleepy waters cast
From purple skies ne'er deep'ning into night,
Yet soft, as if each moment were their last
Of glory, fading fast
Along the mountains!—but *thy* golden day
Was not as those that warn us of decay.

And ever, through thy shades,
A swell of deep Æolian sound went by,
From fountain-voices in their secret glades,
And low reed-whispers, making sweet reply
To summer's breezy sigh,
And young leaves trembling to the wind's light breath,
Which ne'er had touch'd them with a hue of death!

And the transparent sky
Rung as a dome, all thrilling to the strain
Of harps that, 'midst the woods, made harmony
Solemn and sweet; yet troubling not the brain
With dreams and yearnings vain,
And dim remembrances, that still draw birth
From the bewild'ring music of the earth.

And who, with silent tread,
Moved o'er the plains of waving asphodel?
Call'd from the dim procession of the dead,
Who, 'midst the shadowy amaranth-bowers might dwell,
And listen to the swell
Of those majestic hymn-notes, and inhale
The spirit wandering in the immortal gale?

They of the sword, whose praise,
With the bright wine at nations' feasts, went round!
They of the lyre, whose unforgotten lays
Forth on the winds had sent their mighty sound,
And in all regions found
Their echoes 'midst the mountains!—and become
In man's deep heart as voices of his home!

They of the daring thought!
Daring and powerful, yet to dust allied—
Whose flight through stars, and seas, and depths, had sought
The soul's far birthplace—but without a guide!
Sages and seers, who died,
And left the world their high mysterious dreams,
Born 'midst the olive woods, by Grecian streams.

But the most *loved* are they
Of whom fame speaks not with her clarion voice,
In regal halls!—the shades o'erhang their way,
The vale, with its deep fountains, is their choice,
And gentle hearts rejoice
Around their steps; till silently they die,
As a stream shrinks from summer's burning eye.

And these—of whose abode,
'Midst her green valleys, earth retain'd no trace,
Save a flower springing from their burial-sod,
A shade of sadness on some kindred face,
A dim and vacant place
In some sweet home;—thou hadst no wreaths for *these*,
Thou sunny land! with all thy deathless trees!

The peasant at his door
Might sink to die when vintage feasts were spread,
And songs on every wind! From *thy* bright shore
No lovelier vision floated round his head—
Thou wert for nobler dead!

He heard the bounding steps which round him fell,
And sigh'd to bid the festal sun farewell!

The slave, whose very tears
Were a forbidden luxury, and whose breast
Kept the mute woes and burning thoughts of years,
As embers in a burial-urn compress'd;
He might not be thy guest!
No gentle breathings from thy distant sky
Came o'er *his* path, and whisper'd "Liberty!"

Calm, on its leaf-strewn bier,
Unlike a gift of Nature to Decay,
Too rose-like still, too beautiful, too dear,
The child at rest before the mother lay,
E'en so to pass away,
With its bright smile!—Elysium! what wert *thou*
To her, who wept o'er that young slumb'rer's brow?

Thou hadst no home, green land!
For the fair creature from her bosom gone,
With life's fresh flowers just opening in its hand,
And all the lovely thoughts and dreams unknown
Which, in its clear eye, shone
Like spring's first wakening! but that light was past—
Where went the dewdrop swept before the blast?

Not where *thy* soft winds play'd,
Not where thy waters lay in glassy sleep!
Fade with thy bowers, thou Land of Visions, fade!
From thee no voice came o'er the gloomy deep,
And bade man cease to weep!

Fade, with the amaranth plain, the myrtle grove,
Which could not yield one hope to sorrowing love.[1]

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[1] The form of this poem was a good deal altered by Mrs. Hemans some years after its first publication, and, though done so perhaps to advantage, one verse was omitted. As originally written, the two following stanzas concluded the piece —

For the most loved are they
Of whom Fame speaks not with her clarion voice,
In regal halls! the shades o'erhang their way—
The vale, with its deep fountains, is their choice,
And gentle hearts rejoice
Around their steps; till silently they die,
As a stream shrinks from summer's burning eye.

And the world knows not then,
Not then, nor ever, what pure thoughts are fled!
Yet these are they, who on the souls of men
Come back, when night her folding veil hath spread,
The long-remember'd dead!
But not with *thee* might aught save glory dwell—
Fade, fade away, thou shore of asphodel!

THE FUNERAL GENIUS;

AN ANCIENT STATUE.

"Debout, couronné de fleurs, les bras élevés et posés sur sa tête, et le dos appuyé contre un pin, ce génie semble exprimer par son attitude le répos des morts. Les bas-reliefs des tombeaux offrent souvent des figures semblables." —— VISCONTI, *Description des Antiques du Musée Royal.*

THOU shouldst be look'd on when the starlight falls
Through the blue stillness of the summer-air,
Not by the torch-fire wavering on the walls—
It hath too fitful and too wild a glare!
And thou!—thy rest, the soft, the lovely, seems
To ask light steps, that will not break its dreams.

Flowers are upon thy brow; for so the dead
Were crown'd of old, with pale spring flowers like these:
Sleep on thine eye hath sunk; yet softly shed,
As from the wing of some faint southern breeze:
And the pine-boughs o'ershadow thee with gloom
Which of the grove seems breathing—not the tomb.

They fear'd not death, whose calm and gracious thought
Of the last hour, hath settled thus in thee!
They who thy wreath of pallid roses wrought,
And laid thy head against the forest tree,

As that of one, by music's dreamy close,
On the wood-violets lull'd to deep repose.

They fear'd not death!—yet who shall say his touch
Thus lightly falls on gentle things and fair?
Doth he bestow, or will he leave so much
Of tender beauty as thy features wear?
Thou sleeper of the bower! on whose young eyes
So still a night, a night of summer, lies!

Had they seen aught like thee?—Did some fair boy
Thus, with his graceful hair, before them rest?
—His graceful hair, no more to wave in joy,
But drooping, as with heavy dews oppress'd:
And his eye veil'd so softly by its fringe,
And his lip faded to the white-rose tinge?

Oh! happy, if to them the one dread hour
Made known its lessons from a brow like thine!
If all their knowledge of the spoiler's power
Came by a look so tranquilly divine!
—Let him, who *thus* hath seen the lovely part,
Hold well that image to his thoughtful heart!

But thou, fair slumberer! was there less of woe,
Or love, or terror, in the days of old,
That men pour'd out their gladdening spirit's flow,
Like sunshine, on the desolate and cold,
And gave thy semblance to the shadowy king,
Who for deep souls had then a deeper sting?

In the dark bosom of the earth they laid
Far more than we—for loftier faith is ours!
Their gems were lost in ashes—yet they made
The grave a place of beauty and of flowers,
With fragrant wreaths, and summer boughs array'd,
And lovely sculpture gleaming through the shade.

Is it for *us* a darker gloom to shed
O'er its dim precincts?—do we not intrust
But for a time, its chambers with our dead,
And strew immortal seed upon the dust?
—Why should *we* dwell on that which lies beneath,
When living light hath touch'd the brow of death?

THE TOMBS OF PLATÆA.

FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAMS.

And there they sleep!—the men who stood
In arms before th' exulting sun,
And bathed their spears in Persian blood,
And taught the earth how freedom might be won.

They sleep!—th' Olympic wreaths are dead,
Th' Athenian lyres are hush'd and gone;
The Dorian voice of song is fled—
Slumber, ye mighty! slumber deeply on.

They sleep, and seems not all around
As hallow'd unto glory's tomb?
Silence is on the battle-ground,
The heavens are loaded with a breathless gloom.

And stars are watching on their height,
But dimly seen through mist and cloud,
And still and solemn is the light
Which folds the plain, as with a glimmering shroud.

And thou, pale night-queen! here thy beams
Are not as those the shepherd loves,
Nor look they down on shining streams,
By Naiads haunted in their laurel groves:

Thou seest no pastoral hamlet sleep,
In shadowy quiet, 'midst its vines;
No temple gleaming from the steep,
'Midst the grey olives, or the mountain pines:

But o'er a dim and boundless waste,
Thy rays, e'en like a tomb-lamp's, brood,
Where man's departed steps are traced
But by his dust, amidst the solitude.

And be it thus!—what slave shall tread
O'er freedom's ancient battle-plains?
Let deserts wrap the glorious dead,
When their bright Land sits weeping o'er her chains:

Here, where the Persian clarion rung,
And where the Spartan sword flash'd high,
And where the pæan strains were sung,
From year to year swell'd on by liberty!

Here should no voice, no sound, be heard,
Until the bonds of Greece be riven,
Save of the leader's charging word,
Or the shrill trumpet, pealing up through heaven.

Rest in your silent homes, ye brave!
No vines festoon your lonely tree![1]
No harvests o'er your war-field wave,
Till rushing winds proclaim—the land is free!

THE VIEW FROM CASTRI.

FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAMS.

There have been bright and glorious pageants here,
Where now grey stones and moss-grown columns lie;
There have been words, which earth grew pale to hear,
Breathed from the cavern's misty chambers nigh:
There have been voices, through the sunny sky,
And the pine-woods, their choral hymn-notes sending,
And reeds and lyres, their Dorian melody,
With incense clouds around the temple blending,
And throngs with laurel-boughs, before the altar bending.

There have been treasures of the seas and isles
Brought to the day-god's now-forsaken throne;
Thunders have peal'd along the rock-defiles,
When the far-echoing battle-horn made known
That foes were on their way!—the deep-wind's moan
Hath chill'd th' invaders heart with secret fear
And from the Sibyl-grottoes, wild and lone,

[1] A single tree appears in Mr. Williams's impressive picture.

Storms have gone forth, which, in their fierce career,
From his bold hand have struck the banner and the spear.

The shrine hath sunk!—but thou unchanged art there!
Mount of the voice and vision, robed with dreams
Unchanged, and rushing through the radiant air,
With thy dark waving pines, and flashing streams,
And all thy founts of song! their bright course teems
With inspiration yet; and each dim haze,
Or golden cloud which floats around thee, seems
As with its mantle veiling from our gaze
The mysteries of the past, the gods of elder days!

Away, vain phantasies!—doth less of power
Dwell round thy summit, or thy cliffs invest,
Though in deep stillness now, the ruin's flower
Wave o'er the pillars mouldering on thy breast?
—Lift through the free blue heavens thine arrowy crest!
Let the great rocks their solitude regain!
No Delphian lyres now break thy noontide rest
With their full chords:—but silent be the strain!
Thou hast a mightier voice to speak th' Eternal's reign![1]

[1] This, with the preceding, and several of the following pieces, first appeared in the *Edinburgh Magazine.*

THE FESTAL HOUR.

When are the lessons given
That shake the startled earth? When wakes the foe
While the friend sleeps? When falls the traitor's blow?
When are proud sceptres riven,
High hopes o'erthrown?—It is when lands rejoice,
When cities blaze and lift th' exulting voice,
And wave their banners to the kindling heaven!

Fear ye the festal hour!
When mirth o'erflows, then tremble!—'T was a night
Of gorgeous revel, wreaths, and dance, and light,
When through the regal bower
The trumpet peal'd, ere yet the song was done,
And there were shrieks in golden Babylon,
And trampling armies, ruthless in their power.

The marble shrines were crown'd:
Young voices, through the blue Athenian sky,
And Dorian reeds, made summer-melody,
And censers waved around;
And lyres were strung and bright libations pour'd!
When, through the streets, flash'd out th' avenging sword,
Fearless and free, the sword with myrtles bound![1]

[1] The sword of Harmodius.

Through Rome a triumph pass'd.
Rich in her sun-god's mantling beams went by
That long array of glorious pageantry,
With shout and trumpet-blast.
An empire's gems their starry splendour shed
O'er the proud march; a king in chains was led;
A stately victor, crown'd and robed, came last.[1]

And many a Dryad's bower
Had lent the laurels which, in waving play,
Stirr'd the warm air, and glisten'd round his way,
As a quick-flashing shower.
—O'er his own porch, meantime, the cypress hung,
Through his fair halls a cry of anguish rung—
Woe for the dead!—the father's broken flower!

A sound of lyre and song,
In the still night, went floating o'er the Nile,
Whose waves, by many an old mysterious pile,
Swept with that voice along;
And lamps were shining o'er the red wine's foam
Where a chief revell'd in a monarch's dome,
And fresh rose-garlands deck'd a glittering throng.

'T was Antony that bade
The joyous chords ring out!—but strains arose
Of wilder omen at the banquet's close!
Sounds, by no mortal made,[2]

---

[1] Paulus Æmilius, one of whose sons died a few days before, and another shortly after, his triumph on the conquest of Macedon, when Perseus, king of that country, was led in chains.

[2] See the description given by Plutarch, in his life of Antony, of the supernatural sounds heard in the streets of Alexandria, the night before Antony's death.

Shook Alexandria through her streets that night,
And pass'd—and with another sunset's light,
The kingly Roman on his bier was laid.

Bright 'midst its vineyards lay
The fair Campanian city,[1] with its towers
And temples gleaming through dark olive-bowers,
Clear in the golden day;
Joy was around it as the glowing sky,
And crowds had fill'd its halls of revelry,
And all the sunny air was music's way.

A cloud came o'er the face
Of Italy's rich heaven!—its crystal blue
Was changed, and deepen'd to a wrathful hue
Of night, o'ershadowing space,
As with the wings of death!—in all his power
Vesuvius woke, and hurl'd the burning shower,
And who could tell the buried city's place?

Such things have been of yore,
In the gay regions where the citrons blow,
And purple summers all their sleepy glow
On the grape-clusters pour;
And where the palms to spicy winds are waving,
Along clear seas of melting sapphire, laving,
As with a flow of light, their southern shore.

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[1] Herculaneum, of which it is related, that all the inhabitants were assembled in the theatres, when the shower of ashes which covered the city descended.

Turn we to other climes!—
Far in the Druid-Isle a feast was spread,
'Midst the rock-altars of the warrior dead:[1]
And ancient battle-rhymes
Were chanted to the harp; and yellow mead
Went flowing round, and tales of martial deed,
And lofty songs of Britain's elder time;

But, ere the giant-fane
Cast its broad shadows on the robe of even,
Hush'd were the bards, and in the face of heaven,
O'er that old burial-plain
Flash'd the keen Saxon dagger!—Blood was streaming
Where late the mead-cup to the sun was gleaming,
And Britain's hearths were heap'd that night in vain—

For they return'd no more!
They that went forth at morn, with reckless heart,
In that fierce banquet's mirth to bear their part;
And, on the rushy floor,
And the bright spears and bucklers of the walls,
The high wood-fires were blazing in their halls;
But not for them—they slept—their feast was o'er!

Fear ye the festal hour!
Ay, tremble when the cup of joy o'erflows!
Tame down the swelling heart!—the bridal rose,
And the rich myrtle's flower

---

[1] Stonehenge, said by some traditions to have been erected to the memory of Ambrosius, an early British king; and by others mentioned as a monumental record of the massacre of British chiefs here alluded to.

Have veil'd the sword!—Red wines have sparkled fast
From venom'd goblets, and soft breezes pass'd,
With fatal perfume, through the revel's bower.

Twine the young glowing wreath!
But pour not all your spirit in the song,
Which through the sky's deep azure floats along
Like summer's quickening breath!
The ground is hollow in the path of mirth:
Oh! far too daring seems the joy of earth,
So darkly press'd and girdled in by death!

SONG OF THE BATTLE OF MORGARTEN.

"In the year 1315, Switzerland was invaded by Duke Leopold of Austria, with a formidable army. It is well attested that this prince repeatedly declared he 'would trample the audacious rustics under his feet;' and that he had procured a large stock of cordage, for the purpose of binding their chiefs, and putting them to death.

"The 15th October, 1315, dawned. The sun darted its first rays on the shields and armour of the advancing host; and this being the first army ever known to have attempted the frontiers of the cantons, the Swiss viewed its long line with various emotions. Montfort de Tettnang led the cavalry into the narrow pass, and soon filled the whole space between the mountain (Mount Sattel) and the lake. The fifty men on the eminence (above Morgarten) raised a sudden shout, and rolled down heaps of rocks and stones among the crowded ranks. The confederates on the mountain, perceiving the impression made by this attack, rushed down in close array, and fell upon the flank of the disordered column. With massy clubs they dashed in pieces the armour of the enemy, and dealt their blows and thrusts with long pikes. The narrowness of the defile admitted of no evolutions, and a slight frost having injured the road, the horses were impeded in all their motions; many leaped into the lake; all were startled; and at last the whole column gave way, and fell suddenly back on the infantry; and these last, as the nature of the country did not allow them to open their files, were run over by the fugitives, and many of them trampled to death. A general rout ensued, and Duke Leopold was, with much difficulty, rescued by a peasant, who led him to Winterthur, where the historian of the times saw him arrive in the evening, pale, sullen, and dismayed."—Planta's *History of the Helvetic Confederacy.*

The wine-month[1] shone in its golden prime,
And the red grapes clustering hung,
But a deeper sound, through the Switzer's clime,
Than the vintage-music, rung.
A sound, through vaulted cave,
A sound, through echoing glen,
Like the hollow swell of a rushing wave;
'Twas the tread of steel-girt men.

And a trumpet, pealing wild and far,
'Midst the ancient rocks was blown,
Till the Alps replied to that voice of war
With a thousand of their own.
And through the forest-glooms
Flash'd helmets to the day,
And the winds were tossing knightly plumes,
Like the larch-boughs in their play.

In Hasli's[2] wilds there was gleaming steel,
As the host of the Austrian pass'd;
And the Schreckhorn's[3] rocks, with a savage peal,
Made mirth of his clarion's blast.
Up 'midst the Righi[4] snows
The stormy march was heard,
With the charger's tramp, whence fire-sparks rose,
And the leader's gathering word.

---

[1] *Wine-month*, the German name for October.

[2] Hasli, a wild district in the canton of Berne.

[3] Schreckhorn, the *peak of terror*, a mountain in the canton of Berne.

[4] Righi, a mountain in the canton of Schwytz.

But a band, the noblest band of all,
Through the rude Morgarten strait,
With blazon'd streamers, and lances tall,
Moved onwards in princely state.
They came with heavy chains,
For the race despised so long—
But amidst his Alp-domains,
The herdsman's arm is strong!

The sun was reddening the clouds of morn
When they enter'd the rock-defile,
And shrill as a joyous hunter's horn
Their bugles rung the while.
But on the misty height,
Where the mountain-people stood,
There was stillness, as of night,
When storms at distance brood.

There was stillness, as of deep dead night,
And a pause—but not of fear,
While the Switzers gazed on the gathering might
Of the hostile shield and spear.
On wound those columns bright
Between the lake and wood,
But they look'd not to the misty height
Where the mountain-people stood.

The pass was fill'd with their serried power,
All helm'd and mail-array'd,
And their steps had sounds like a thunder-shower
In the rustling forest-shade.

There were prince and crested knight,
Hemm'd in by cliff and flood,
When a shout arose from the misty height
Where the mountain-people stood.

And the mighty rocks came bounding down,
Their startled foes among,
With a joyous whirl from the summit thrown—
—Oh! the herdsman's arm is strong!
They came like lauwine[1] hurl'd
From Alp to Alp in play,
When the echoes shout through the snowy world,
And the pines are borne away.

The fir-woods crash'd on the mountain-side,
And the Switzers rush'd from high,
With a sudden charge, on the flower and pride
Of the Austrian chivalry;
Like hunters of the deer,
They storm'd the narrow dell,
And first in the shock, with Uri's spear,
Was the arm of William Tell.[2]

There was tumult in the crowded strait,
And a cry of wild dismay,
And many a warrior met his fate
From a peasant's hand that day!

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[1] *Lauwine*, the Swiss name for the avalanche.

[2] William Tell's name is particularly mentioned amongst the confederates at Morgarten.

And the empire's banner then
From its place of waving free,
Went down before the shepherd-men,
The men of the Forest-sea.[1]

With their pikes and massy clubs they brake
The cuirass and the shield,
And the war-horse dash'd to the reddening lake
From the reapers of the field!
The field—but not of sheaves—
Proud crests and pennons lay,
Strewn o'er it thick as the birch-wood leaves,
In the autumn tempest's way.

Oh! the sun in heaven fierce havoc view'd
When the Austrian turn'd to fly,
And the brave, in the trampling multitude,
Had a fearful death to die!
And the leader of the war
At eve unhelm'd was seen,
With a hurrying step on the wilds afar,
And a pale and troubled mien.

But the sons of the land which the freeman tills,
Went back from the battle-toil,
To their cabin homes 'midst the deep green hills,
All burden'd with royal spoil.
There were songs and festal fires
On the soaring Alps that night,
When children sprung to greet their sires
From the wild Morgarten fight.

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[1] *Forest-sea*, the lake of the four cantons is also so called.

SEBASTIAN OF PORTUGAL.

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

Dram. Pers.

SEBASTIAN.
GONZALEZ, *his friend.*
ZAMOR, *a young Arab.*
SYLVEIRA.

SEBASTIAN OF PORTUGAL.

Scene I.

The sea-shore near Lisbon.

Sebastian — Gonzalez — Zamor.

Seb. With what young life and fragrance in its breath
My native air salutes me! from the groves
Of citron, and the mountains of the vine,
And thy majestic tide thus foaming on
In power and freedom o'er its golden sands,
Fair stream, my Tajo! youth, with all its glow
And pride of feeling, through my soul and frame
Again seems rushing, as these noble waves
Past their bright shores flow joyously. Sweet land
My own, my fathers' land, of sunny skies
And orange bowers!—Oh! is it not a dream
That thus I tread thy soil? Or do I wake
From a dark dream but now! Gonzalez, say,
Doth it not bring the flush of early life
Back on th' awakening spirit, thus to gaze
On the far-sweeping river, and the shades
Which in their undulating motion speak
Of gentle winds amidst bright waters born,
After the fiery skies and dark-red sands
Of the lone desert? Time and toil must needs

Have changed *our* mien; but this, our blessed land,
Hath gained but richer beauty since we bade
Her glowing shores farewell. Seems it not thus?
Thy brow is clouded.—

Gon. To mine eye the scene
Wears, amidst all its quiet loveliness,
A hue of desolation, and the calm,
The solitude and silence which pervade
Earth, air, and ocean, seem belonging less
To peace than sadness! We have proudly stood
Even on this shore, beside the Atlantic wave,
When it hath look'd not thus.

Seb. Ay, now thy soul
Is in the past! Oh no, it look'd not thus
When the morn smiled upon our thousand sails,
And the winds blew for Afric! How that hour,
With all its hues of glory, seems to burst
Again upon my vision! I behold
The stately barks, the arming, the array,
The crests, the banners of my chivalry
Swayed by the sea-breeze till their motion show'd
Like joyous life! How the proud billows foam'd!
And the oars flashed, like lightnings of the deep,
And the tall spears went glancing to the sun,
And scattering round quick rays, as if to guide
The valiant unto fame! Ay, the blue heaven
Seemed for that noble scene a canopy
Scarce too majestic, while it rung afar
To peals of warlike sound! My gallant bands!
Where are you now?

Gon. Bid the wild desert tell
Where sleep its dead! To mightier hosts than them

Hath it lent graves ere now; and on its breast
Is room for nations yet!
Seb. It cannot be
That all have perish'd! Many a noble man,
Made captive on that war-field, may have burst
His bonds like ours. Cloud not this fleeting hour,
Which to my soul is as the fountain's draught
To the parch'd lip of fever, with a thought
So darkly sad!
Gon. Oh never, never cast
That deep remembrance from you! When once more
Your place is 'midst earth's rulers, let it dwell
Around you, as the shadow of your throne,
Wherein the land may rest. My king, this hour
(Solemn as that which to the voyager's eye,
In far and dim perspective, doth unfold
A new and boundless world) may haply be
The last in which the courage and the power
Of truth's high voice may reach you. Who may stand
As man to man, as friend to friend, before
The ancestral throne of monarchs? Or, perchance,
Toils, such as tame the loftiest to endurance,
Henceforth may wait us here! But howsoe'er
This be, the lessons now from sufferings past
Befit all time, all change. Oh! by the blood,
The free, the generous blood of Portugal,
Shed on the sands of Afric,—by the names
Which, with their centuries of high renown,
There died, extinct for ever,—let not those
Who stood in hope and glory at our side
Here, on this very sea-beach, whence they pass'd

To fall, and leave no trophy,—let them not
Be soon, be e'er forgotten! for their fate
Bears a deep warning in its awfulness,
Whence power might well learn wisdom!
Seb. Think'st thou, then
That years of sufferance and captivity,
Such as have bow'd down eagle hearts ere now,
And made high energies their spoil, have pass'd
So lightly o'er my spirit? It is not thus!
The things thou would'st recall are not of those
To be forgotten! But my heart hath still
A sense, a bounding pulse for hope and joy,
And it is joy which whispers in the breeze
Sent from my own free mountains. Brave Gonzalez!
Thou art one to make thy fearless heart a shield
Unto thy friend, in the dark stormy hour
When knightly crests are trampled, and proud helms
Cleft, and strong breastplates shiver'd. Thou art one
To infuse the soul of gallant fortitude
Into the captive's bosom, and beguile
The long slow march beneath the burning noon
With lofty patience; but for those quick bursts,
Those buoyant efforts of the soul to cast
Her weight of care to earth, those brief delights
Whose source is in a sunbeam, or a sound
Which stirs the blood, or a young breeze, whose wing
Wanders in chainless joy; for things like these
Thou hast no sympathies!—And thou, my Zamor,
Art wrapt in thought! I welcome thee to this,
The kingdom of my fathers. Is it not
A goodly heritage?
Zam. The land is fair:

But he, the archer of the wilderness,
Beholdeth not the palms beneath whose shade
His tents are scatter'd, and his camels rest;
And therefore is he sad!

Seb. Thou must not pine
With that sick yearning of the impatient heart,
Which makes the exile's life one fever'd dream
Of skies, and hills, and voices far away,
And faces wearing the familiar hues
Lent by his native sunbeams. I have known
Too much of this, and would not see another
Thus daily die. If it be so with thee,
My gentle Zamor, speak. Behold, our bark
Yet, with her white sails catching sunset's glow,
Lies within signal reach. If it be thus,
Then fare thee well—farewell, thou brave, and true,
And generous friend! How often is our path
Cross'd by some being whose bright spirit sheds
A passing gladness o'er it, but whose course
Leads down another current, never more
To blend with ours! Yet far within our souls,
Amidst the rushing of the busy world,
Dwells many a secret thought, which lingers yet
Around that image. And e'en so, kind Zamor,
Shalt thou be long remembered!

Zam. By the fame
Of my brave sire, whose deeds the warrior tribes
Tell round the desert's watch-fire, at the hour
Of silence, and of coolness, and of stars,
I will not leave thee! 'Twas in such an hour
The dreams of rest were on me, and I lay
Shrouded in slumber's mantle, as within

The chambers of the dead. Who saved me then,
When the pard, soundless as the midnight, stole
Soft on the sleeper? Whose keen dart transfix'd
The monarch of the solitudes? I woke,
And saw *thy* javelin crimson'd with his blood,
Thou, my deliverer! and my heart e'en then
Call'd thee its brother.

Seb. For that gift of life
With one of tenfold price, even freedom's self,
Thou hast repaid me well.

Zam. Then bid me not
Forsake thee! Though my father's tents may rise
At times upon my spirit, yet my home
Shall be amidst thy mountains, Prince, and thou
Shalt be my chief, until I see thee robed
With all thy power. When thou canst need no more
Thine Arab's faithful heart and vigorous arm,
From the green regions of the setting sun
Then shall the wanderer turn his steps, and seek
His orient wilds again.

Seb. Be near me still,
And ever, O my warrior! I shall stand
Again amidst my hosts a mail-clad king,
Begirt with spears and banners, and the pomp
And the proud sounds of battle. Be thy place
Then at my side. When doth a monarch cease
To need true hearts, bold hands? Not in the field
Of arms, nor on the throne of power, nor yet
The couch of sleep. Be our friend, we will not part.

Gon. Be all thy friends then faithful, for e'en yet
They may be fiercely tried.

Seb. I doubt them not.

Even now my heart beats high to meet their welcome.
Let us away!

Gon. Yet hear once more, my liege:
The humblest pilgrim, from his distant shrine
Returning, finds not e'en his peasant home
Unchanged amidst its vineyards. Some loved face,
Which made the sun-light of his lowly board,
Is touch'd by sickness; some familiar voice
Greets him no more: and shall not fate and time
Have done their work, since last we parted hence,
Upon an empire? Ay, within those years,
Hearts from their ancient worship have fall'n off
And bow'd before new stars: high names have sunk
From their supremacy of place, and others
Gone forth, and made themselves the mighty sounds
At which thrones tremble. Oh! be slow to trust
E'en those to whom your smiles were wont to seem
As light is unto flowers. Search well the depths
Of bosoms in whose keeping you would shrine
The secret of your state. Storms pass not by,
Leaving earth's face unchanged.

Seb. Whence didst thou learn
The cold distrust which casts so deep a shadow
O'er a most noble nature?

Gon. Life hath been
My stern and only teacher. I have known
Vicissitudes in all things, but the most
In human hearts. Oh! yet awhile tame down
That royal spirit, till the hour be come
When it may burst its bondage! On thy brow
The suns of burning climes have set their seal,
And toil, and years, and perils, have not pass'd

O'er the bright aspect, and the ardent eye,
As doth a breeze of summer. Be that change
The mask beneath whose shelter thou may'st read
Men's thoughts, and veil thine own.

Seb. Am I thus changed
From all I was? And yet it needs must be,
Since e'en my soul hath caught another hue
From its long sufferings. Did I not array
The gallant flower of Lusian chivalry,
And lead the mighty of the land, to pour
Destruction on the Moslem? I return,
And as a fearless and a trusted friend,
Bring, from the realms of my captivity,
An Arab of the desert!—But the sun
Hath sunk below th' Atlantic. Let us hence—
Gonzalez, fear me not. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

A Street in Lisbon illuminated.

Many Citizens.

1*st Cit.* In sooth our city wears a goodly mien
With her far-blazing fanes, and festive lamps
Shining from all her marble palaces,
Countless as heaven's fair stars. The humblest lattice
Sends forth its radiance. How the sparkling waves
Fling back the light!

2*d Cit.* Ay, 'tis a gallant show;
And one which serves, like others, to conceal
Things which must not be told.

3*d Cit.* What wouldst thou say?

2d Cit. That which may scarce, in perilous times like these,
Be said with safety. Hast thou look'd within
Those stately palaces? Were they but peopled
With the high race of warlike nobles, once
Their princely lords, think'st thou, good friend, that now
They would be glittering with this hollow pomp,
To greet a conqueror's entrance?

3d Cit. Thou say'st well.
None but a land forsaken of its chiefs
Had been so lost and won.

4th Cit. The lot is cast;
We have but to yield. Hush! for some strangers come:
Now, friends, beware.

1st Cit. Did the king pass this way
At morning, with his train?

2d Cit. Ay: saw you not
The long and rich procession?

[SEBAST. *enters with* GONZAL. *and* ZAMOR.

Seb. to Gon. This should be
The night of some high festival. E'en thus
My royal city to the skies sent up
From her illumined fanes and towers a voice
Of gladness, welcoming our first return
From Afric's coast. Speak thou, Gonzalez, ask
The cause of this rejoicing. To my heart
Deep feelings rush, so mingled and so fast,
My voice perchance might tremble.

Gon. Citizen,
What festal night is this, that all your streets
Are throng'd and glittering thus?

1*st Cit.* Hast thou not heard
Of the king's entry, in triumphal pomp,
This very morn?
Gon. The king! triumphal pomp!
Thy words are dark.
Seb. Speak yet again: mine ears
Ring with strange sounds. Again!
1*st Cit.* I said, the king,
Philip of Spain, and now of Portugal,
This morning enter'd with a conqueror's train
Our city's royal palace: and for this
We hold our festival.
Seb. (*in a low voice.*) Thou said'st—the king!
His name?—I heard it not.
1*st Cit.* Philip of Spain.
Seb. Philip of Spain! We slumber, till aroused
By th' earthquake's bursting shock. Hath there not fall'n
A sudden darkness? All things seem to float
Obscurely round me. Now 'tis past. The streets
Are blazing with strange fire. Go, quench those lamps;
They glare upon me till my very brain
Grows dizzy, and doth whirl. How dare ye thus
Light up your shrines for *him?*
Gon. Away, away!
This is no time, no scene—
Seb. Philip of Spain!
How name ye this fair land? Why—is it not
The free, the chivalrous Portugal? the land
By the proud ransom of heroic blood
Won from the Moor of old? Did that red stream

Sink to the earth, and leave no fiery current
In the veins of noble men, that so its tide,
Full swelling at the sound of hostile steps,
Might be a kingdom's barrier?

2d Cit. That high blood
Which should have been our strength, profusely shed
By the rash King Sebastian, bathed the plains
Of fatal Alcazar. Our monarch's guilt
Hath brought this ruin down.

Seb. Must this be heard
And borne, and unchastised. Man, darest thou stand
Before me face to face, and thus arraign
Thy sovereign?

Zam. (*aside to Seb.*) Shall I lift the sword, my Prince,
Against thy foes?

Gon. Be still—or all is lost.

2d Cit. I dare speak that which all men think and know.
'Tis to Sebastian, and his waste of life,
And power, and treasure, that we owe these bonds.

3d Cit. Talk not of bonds. May our new monarch rule
The weary land in peace! But who art thou?
Whence com'st thou, haughty stranger, that these things,
Known to all nations, should be new to thee?

Seb. (*wildly.*) I come from regions where the cities lie
In ruins, not in chains.

[*Exit with* Gonzal. *and* Zamor.

2d Cit. He wears the mien

Of one that hath commanded; yet his looks
And words were strangely wild.
1st Cit. Mark'd you his fierce
And haughty gesture, and the flash that broke
From his dark eye, when King Sebastian's name
Became our theme?
2d Cit. Trust me, there's more in this
Than may be lightly said. These are no times
To breathe men's thoughts i' th' open face of heaven
And ear of multitudes. They that would speak
Of monarchs and their deeds, should keep within
Their quiet homes. Come, let us hence, and then
We'll commune of this stranger.

The Portico of a Palace.

SEBASTIAN.—GONZALEZ.—ZAMOR.

Seb. Withstand me not! I tell thee that my soul,
With all its passionate energies, is roused
Unto that fearful strength which *must* have way
E'en like the elements, in their hour of might
And mastery o'er creation.
Gon. But they *wait*
That hour in silence. O! be calm awhile,
Thine is not come. My king—
Seb. I am no king,
While in the very palace of my sires,
Ay, where mine eyes first drank the glorious light,
Where my soul's thrilling echoes first awoke
To the high sound of earth's immortal names,
Th' usurper lives and reigns. I am no king
Until I cast him thence.

Zam. Shall not thy voice
Be as a trumpet to the awakining land?
Will not the bright swords flash like sun-bursts forth,
When the brave hear their chief?
Gon. Peace, Zamor, peace!
Child of the desert, what hast thou to do
With the calm hour of counsel?
—Monarch, pause,
A kingdom's destiny should not be the sport
Of passion's reckless winds. There is a time
When men, in very weariness of heart
And careless desolation, tamed to yield
By misery, strong as death, will lay their souls
E'en at the conqueror's feet, as nature sinks,
After long torture, into cold, and dull,
And heavy sleep. But comes there not an hour
Of fierce atonement? Ay, the slumberer wakes
With gather'd strength and vengeance; and the sense
And the remembrance of his agonies
Are in themselves a power, whose fearful path
Is like the path of ocean, when the heavens
Take off its interdict. Wait then the hour
Of that high impulse.
Seb. Is it not the sun
Whose radiant bursting through the embattled clouds
Doth make it morn? The hour of which thou speak'st,
Itself, with all its glory, is the work
Of some commanding nature, which doth bid
The sullen shades disperse. Away!—e'en now
The land's high hearts, the fearless and the true,
Shall know they have a leader. Is not this

The mansion of mine own, mine earliest, friend
Sylveira?

Gon. Ay, its glittering lamps too well
Illume the stately vestibule to leave
Our sight a moment's doubt. He ever loved
Such pageantries.

Seb. *His* dwelling thus adorn'd
On such a night! Yet will I seek him here.
He must be faithful, and to him the first
My tale shall be reveal'd. A sudden chill
Falls on my heart; and yet I will not wrong
My friend with dull suspicion. He hath been
Link'd all too closely with mine inmost soul.
And what have I to lose?

Gon. Is their blood nought
Who without hope will follow where thou lead'st,
E'en unto death?

Seb. Was that a brave man's voice?
Warrior, and friend! how long then hast thou learn'd
To hold thy blood thus dear?

Gon. Of *mine*, mine own
Think'st thou I spoke? When all is shed for thee,
Thou'lt know me better.

Seb. (*entering the palace.*) For a while farewell.
[*Exit.*

Gon. Thus princes lead men's hearts. Come, follow me,
And if a home is left me still, brave Zamor,
There will I bid thee welcome. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

A Hall within the Palace.

Sebastian.—Sylveira.

Sylv. Whence art thou, stranger?—what wouldst thou with me?
There is a fiery wildness in thy mien
Startling and almost fearful.
Seb. From the stern,
And vast, and desolate wilderness, whose lord
Is the fierce lion, and whose gentlest wind
Breathes of the tomb, and whose dark children make
The bow and spear their law, men bear not back
That smilingness of aspect, wont to mask
The secrets of their spirits 'midst the stir
Of courts and cities. I have look'd on scenes
Boundless, and strange, and terrible; I have known
Sufferings which are not in the shadowy scope
Of wild imagination; and these things
Have stamp'd me with their impress. Man of peace,
Thou look'st on one familiar with the extremes
Of grandeur and of misery.
Sylv. Stranger, speak
Thy name and purpose briefly, for the time
Ill suits these mysteries. I must hence; to-night
I feast the lords of Spain.
Seb. Is that a task
For King Sebastian's friend?
Sylv. Sebastian's friend!
That name hath lost its meaning. Will the dead
Rise from their silent dwellings, to upbraid

The living for their mirth. The grave sets bounds
Unto all human friendship.
Seb. On the plain
Of Alcazar full many a stately flower,
The pride and crown of some high house, was laid
Low in the dust of Afric; but of these
Sebastian was not one.
Sylv. I am not skill'd
To deal with men of mystery. Take, then, off
The strange dark scrutiny of thine eye from mine.
What mean'st thou?—Speak!
Seb. Sebastian died not there.
I read no joy in that cold doubting mien.
Is not thy name Sylveira?
Sylv. Ay.
Seb. Why, then,
Be glad! I tell thee that Sebastian lives!
Think thou on this—he lives! Should he return
—For he may yet return—and find the friend
In whom he trusted with such perfect trust
As should be heaven's alone—mark'st thou my words?
—Should he then find this man, not girt and arm'd,
And watching o'er the heritage of his lord,
But, reckless of high fame and loyal faith,
Holding luxurious revels with his foes,
How wouldst thou meet his glance?
Sylv. As I do thine,
Keen though it be, and proud.
Seb. Why, thou dost quail
Before it, even as if the burning eye
Of the broad sun pursued thy shrinking soul
Through all its depths.

Sylv. Away! he died not there!
He *should* have died there, with the chivalry
And strength and honour of his kingdom, lost
By his impetuous rashness.
Seb. This from *thee?*
Who hath given power to falsehood, that one gaze
At its unmask'd and withering mien, should blight
High souls at once? I wake. And this from thee?
There are, whose eyes discern the secret springs
Which lie beneath the desert, and the gold
And gems within earth's caverns, far below
The everlasting hills: but who hath dared
To dream that heaven's most awful attribute
Invested his mortality, and to boast
That through its inmost folds his glance could read
One heart, one human heart? Why, then, to love
And trust is but to lend a traitor arms
Of keenest temper and unerring aim,
Wherewith to pierce our souls. But thou, beware!
Sebastian lives!
Sylv. If it be so, and thou
Art of his followers still, then bid him seek
Far in the wilds, which gave one sepulchre
To his proud hosts, a kingdom and a home,
For none is left him here.
Seb. This is to live
An age of wisdom in an hour! The man
Whose empire, as in scorn, o'erpass'd the bounds
E'en of the infinite deep; whose orient realms
Lay bright beneath the morning, while the clouds
Were brooding in their sunset mantle still,
O'er his majestic regions of the west:

This heir of fair dominion shall return,
And, in the very city of his birth,
Shall find no home! Ay, I *will* tell him this,
And he will answer that the tale is false,
False as a traitor's hollow words of love;
And that the stately dwelling, in whose halls
We commune now—a friend's, a monarch's gift,
Unto the chosen of his heart, Sylveira,
Should yield him still a welcome.

Sylv. Fare thee well!
I may not pause to hear thee, for thy words
Are full of danger, and of snares, perchance
Laid by some treach'rous foe. But all in vain.
I mock thy wiles to scorn.

Seb. Ha! ha! The snake
Doth pride himself in his distorted cunning,
Deeming it wisdom. Nay, thou go'st not thus.
My heart is bursting, and I *will* be heard.
What! know'st thou not my spirit was born to hold
Dominion over thine? Thou shalt not cast
Those bonds thus lightly from thee. Stand thou there,
And tremble in the presence of thy lord!

Sylv. This is all madness.

Seb. Madness! no—I say
'Tis Reason starting from her sleep, to feel,
And see, and know, in all their cold distinctness,
Things which come o'er her, as a sense of pain
O' th' sudden wakes the dreamer. Stay thee yet:
Be still. Thou'rt used to smile and to obey;
Ay, and to weep. I have seen thy tears flow fast,
As from the fullness of a heart o'ercharged
With loyal love. Oh! never, never more

Let tears or smiles be trusted! When thy king
Went forth on his disastrous enterprise,
Upon thy bed of sickness thou wast laid,
And he stood o'er thee with the look of one
Who leaves a dying brother, and his eyes
Were fill'd with tears like thine. No! *not* like thine:
His bosom knew no falsehood, and he deem'd
Thine clear and stainless as a warrior's shield,
Wherein high deeds and noble forms alone
Are brightly imaged forth.

Sylv. What now avail
These recollections?

Seb. What! I have seen thee shrink,
As a murderer from the eye of light, before me:
I have earn'd (how dearly and how bitterly
It matters not, but I *have* earn'd at last)
Deep knowledge, fearful wisdom. Now, begone!
Hence to thy guests, and fear not, though arraign'd
E'en of Sebastian's friendship. Make his scorn
(For he *will* scorn thee, as a crouching slave
By all high hearts is scorn'd) thy right, thy charter
Unto vile safety. Let the secret voice,
Whose low upbraidings will not sleep within thee,
Be as a sign, a token of thy claim
To all such guerdons as are shower'd on traitors,
When noble men are crush'd. And fear thou not:—
'Tis but the kingly cedar which the storm
Hurls from his mountain throne:—th' ignoble shrub
Grovelling beneath, may live.

Sylv. It is *thy* part
To tremble for thy life.

Seb. They that have look'd

Upon a heart like thine, should know too well
The worth of life to tremble. Such things make
Brave men, and reckless. Ay, and they whom fate
Would trample should be thus. It is enough—
Thou may'st depart.

Sylv. And thou, if thou dost prize
Thy safety, speed thee hence. [*Exit* SYLVEIRA.

Seb. (*alone.*) And this is he
Who was as mine own soul; whose image rose,
Shadowing my dreams of glory with the thought
That on the sick man's weary couch he lay,
Pining to share my battles!

CHORUS.

Ye winds that sweep
The conquer'd billows of the western deep,
Or wander where the morn
'Midst the resplendent Indian heavens is born,
Waft o'er bright isles, and glorious worlds, the fame
Of the crown'd Spaniard's name:
Till in each glowing zone
Its might the nations own,
And bow to him the vassal knee
Whose sceptre shadows realms from sea to sea.

Seb. Away—away! this is no place for him
Whose name hath thus resounded, but is now
A word of desolation. [*Exit.*

ODE

ON THE DEFEAT OF KING SEBASTIAN OF PORTUGAL, AND HIS ARMY, IN AFRICA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH OF HERRERA.

Ferdinand de Herrera, surnamed the Divine, was a Spanish poet, who lived in the reign of Charles V., and is still considered by the Castilians as one of their classic writers. He aimed at the introduction of a new style into Spanish poetry, and his lyrics are distinguished by the sustained majesty of their language, the frequent recurrence of expressions and images, derived apparently from a fervent study of the prophetic books of Scripture, and the lofty tone of national pride maintained throughout, and justified indeed by the nature of the subjects to which some of these productions are devoted. This last characteristic is blended with a deep and enthusiastic feeling of religion, which rather exalts than tempers the haughty confidence of the poet in the high destinies of his country. Spain is to him what Judea was to the bards who sang beneath the shadow of her palm-trees—the chosen and favoured land, whose people, severed from all others by the purity and devotedness of their faith, are peculiarly called to wreak the vengeance of Heaven upon the infidel. This triumphant conviction is

powerfully expressed in his magnificent Ode on the Battle of Lepanto.

The impression of deep solemnity left upon the mind of the Spanish reader, by another of Herrera's lyric compositions, will, it is feared, be very inadequately conveyed through the medium of the following translation.

"Voz de dolor, y canto de gemido," &c.

A voice of woe, a murmur of lament,
A spirit of deep fear and mingled ire;
Let such record the day, the day of wail
For Lusitania's bitter chastening sent!
She who hath seen her power, her fame expire,
And mourns them in the dust, discrown'd and pale!
And let the awful tale
With grief and horror every realm o'ershade,
From Afric's burning main
To the far sea, in other hues array'd,
And the red limits of the Orient's reign,
Whose nations, haughty though subdued, behold
Christ's glorious banner to the winds unfold.

Alas! for those that in embattled power,
And vain array of chariots and of horse,
O desert Libya! sought thy fatal coast!
And trusting not in Him, the eternal source
Of might and glory, but in earthly force,
Making the strength of multitudes their boast,
A flush'd and crested host,
Elate in lofty dreams of victory, trode
Their path of pride, as o'er a conquer'd land

Given for the spoil; nor raised their eyes to God:
And Israel's Holy One withdrew his hand,
Their sole support;—and heavily and prone
They fell—the car, the steed, the rider all o'erthrown!

It came, the hour of wrath, the hour of woe,
Which to deep solitude and tears consign'd
The peopled realm, the realm of joy and mirth;
A gloom was on the heavens, no mantling glow
Announced the morn—it seem'd as nature pined,
And boding clouds obscured the sunbeam's birth;
While, startling the pale earth,
Bursting upon the mighty and the proud
With visitation dread,
Their crests the Eternal, in his anger, bow'd,
And raised barbarian nations o'er their head,
The inflexible, the fierce, who seek not gold,
But vengeance on their foes, relentless, uncontroll'd.

Then was the sword let loose, the flaming sword
Of the strong infidel's ignoble hand,
Amidst that host, the pride, the flower, the crown
Of thy fair knighthood; and the insatiate horde,
Not with thy life content, O ruin'd land!
Sad Lusitania! even thy bright renown
Defaced and trampled down;
And scatter'd, rushing as a torrent flood,
Thy pomp of arms and banners;—till the sands
Became a lake of blood—thy noblest blood!—
The plain a mountain of thy slaughter'd bands.
Strength on thy foes, resistless might was shed;
On thy devoted sons—amaze, and shame, and dread.

Are *these* the conquerors, *these* the lords of fight,
The warrior men, the invincible, the famed,
Who shook the earth with terror and dismay,
Whose spoils were empires?—They that in their
might
The haughty strength of savage nations tamed,
And gave the spacious orient realms of day
To desolation's sway,
Making the cities of imperial name
E'en as the desert place?
Where now the fearless heart, the soul of flame?
Thus has their glory closed its dazzling race
In one brief hour? Is this their valour's doom,
On distant shores to fall, and find not even a tomb?

Once were they in their splendour and their pride,
As an imperial cedar on the brow
Of the great Lebanon! It rose, array'd
In its rich pomp of foliage, and of wide
Majestic branches, leaving far below
All children of the forest. To its shade
The waters tribute paid,
Fostering its beauty. Birds found shelter there
Whose flight is of the loftiest through the sky,
And the wild mountain-creatures made their lair
Beneath; and nations by its canopy
Were shadow'd o'er. Supreme it stood, and ne'er
Had earth beheld a tree so excellently fair.

But all elated, on its verdant stem,
Confiding solely in its regal height,
It soar'd presumptuous, as for empire born;
And God for this removed its diadem,

And cast it from its regions of delight,
Forth to the spoiler, as a prey and scorn,
By the deep roots uptorn!
And lo! encumb'ring the lone hills it lay,
Shorn of its leaves, dismantled of its state,
While, pale with fear, men hurried far away,
Who in its ample shade had found so late
Their bower of rest; and nature's savage race
'Midst the great ruin sought their dwelling-place.

But thou, base Libya, thou whose arid sand
Hath been a kingdom's death-bed, where one fate
Closed her bright life, and her majestic fame,—
Though to thy feeble and barbarian hand
Hath fall'n the victory, be not thou elate!
Boast not thyself, though thine that day of shame,
Unworthy of a name!
Know, if the Spaniard in his wrath advance,
Aroused to vengeance by a nation's cry,
Pierced by his searching lance,
Soon shalt thou expiate crime with agony,
And thine affrighted streams to ocean's flood
An ample tribute bear of Afric's Paynim blood.

THE

SIEGE OF VALENCIA.

A DRAMATIC POEM.

Judicio ha dado esta no vista hazana
Del valor que en los siglos venideros
Tendrán los Hijos de la fuerte Espana,
Hijos de tal padres herederos.
Halló sola en Numancia todo quanto
Debe con justo titulo cantarse.
Y lo que puede dar materia al canto.

Numancia de Cervantes.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The history of Spain records two instances of the severe and self-devoting heroism, which forms the subject of the following dramatic poem. The first of these occurred at the siege of Tarifa, which was defended, in 1294, for Sancho, King of Castile, during the rebellion of his brother, Don Juan, by Guzman, surnamed the Good.[1] The second is related of Alonzo Lopez de Texeda, who, until his garrison had been utterly disabled by pestilence, maintained the city of Zamora for the children of Don Pedro the Cruel, against the forces of Henrique of Trastamara.[2]

Impressive as were the circumstances which distinguished both these memorable sieges, it appeared to the author of the following pages, that a deeper interest, as well as a stronger colour of nationality, might be imparted to the scenes in which she has feebly attempted "to describe high passions and high actions;" by connecting a religious feeling with the patriotism and high-minded loyalty which had thus been proved "faithful unto death," and by surrounding her ideal *dramatis personæ* with recollections derived from the heroic legends of Spanish chivalry. She has, for this reason, employed the agency of imaginary characters, and fixed upon "*Valencia del Cid*" as the scene to give them

"A local habitation and a name."

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[1] See Quintana's 'Vidas de Espanoles celebres,' p. 53.

[2] See the Preface to Southey's 'Chronicle of the Cid.'

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ALVAR GONZALEZ ..... *Governor of Valencia.*

ALPHONSO, CARLOS ..... *His Sons.*

HERNANDEZ ..... *A Priest.*

ABDULLAH ..... *A Moorish Prince, Chief of the Army besieging Valencia.*

GARCIAS ..... *A Spanish Knight.*

ELMINA ..... *Wife to Gonzalez.*

XIMENA ..... *Her Daughter.*

THERESA ..... *An Attendant.*

Citizens, Soldiers, Attendants, &c.

THE

SIEGE OF VALENCIA.

Scene—Room in a Palace of Valencia.

XIMENA *singing to a lute.*

BALLAD.

"THOU hast not been with a festal throng,
At the pouring of the wine;
Men bear not from the Hall of Song
A mien so dark as thine!
—There's blood upon thy shield,
There's dust upon thy plume,
—Thou hast brought from some disastrous field,
That brow of wrath and gloom!"

"And is there blood upon my shield?
—Maiden! it well may be!
We have sent the streams from our battle-field
All darken'd to the sea!
We have given the founts a stain,
'Midst their woods of ancient pine;
And the ground is wet—but not with rain,
Deep-dyed—but not with wine!

"The ground is wet—but not with rain—
We have been in war array,
And the noblest blood of Christian Spain
Hath bathed her soil to-day.

I have seen the strong man die
And the stripling meet his fate,
Where the mountain-winds go sounding by,
In the Roncesvalles' Strait.

"In the gloomy Roncesvalles' Strait
There are helms and lances cleft;
And they that moved at morn elate
On a bed of heath are left!
There 's many a fair young face,
Which the war-steed hath gone o'er;
At many a board there is kept a place
For those that come no more!"

"Alas! for love, for woman's breast,
If woe like this must be!
—Hast thou seen a youth with an eagle crest,
And a white plume waving free?
With his proud quick-flashing eye,
And his mien of knightly state?
Doth he come from where the swords flash'd high,
In the Roncesvalles' Strait?"

"In the gloomy Roncesvalles' Strait
I saw and mark'd him well;
For nobly on his steed he sate,
When the pride of manhood fell!
—But it is not *youth* which turns
From the field of spears again;
For the boy's wild heart too wildly burns,
Till it rests amidst the slain!"

"Thou canst not say that *he* lies low,
The lovely and the brave;

Oh! none could look on his joyous brow,
And think upon the grave!
Dark, dark perchance the day
Hath been with valour's fate,
But *he* is on his homeward way,
From the Roncesvalles' Strait."

"There is dust upon his joyous brow,
And o'er his graceful head;
And the war-horse will not wake him now,
Though it bruise his greensward bed!
—I have seen the stripling die,
And the strong man meet his fate,
Where the mountain-winds go sounding by,
In the Roncesvalles' Strait!"

ELMINA *enters.*

Elmina. Your songs are not like those of other days,
Mine own Ximena!—Where is now the young
And buoyant spirit of the morn, which once
Breath'd in your spring-like melodies, and woke
Joy's echo from all hearts?
Ximena. My mother, this
Is not the free air of our mountain-wilds;
And these are not the halls, wherein my voice
First pour'd those gladdening strains.
Elmina. Alas! thy heart
(I see it well) doth sicken for the pure
Free-wandering breezes of the joyous hills,
Where thy young brothers, o'er the rock and heath,
Bound in glad boyhood, e'en as torrent streams
Leap brightly from the heights. Had we not been
Within these walls thus suddenly begirt,

Thou wouldst have track'd ere now with step as light,
Their wild wood-paths.

Ximena. I would not but have shared
These hours of woe and peril, though the deep
And solemn feelings wakening at their voice,
Claim all the wrought-up spirit to themselves,
And will not blend with mirth. The storm doth hush
All floating whispery sound, all bird-notes wild
O' th' summer forest, filling earth and heaven
With its own awful music.—And 't is well!
Should not a hero's child be train'd to hear
The trumpet's blast unstartled, and to look
In the fix'd face of Death without dismay?

Elmina. Woe! woe! that aught so gentle and so young
Should thus be call'd to stand i' the tempest's path,
And bear the token and the hue of death
On a bright soul so soon! I had not shrunk
From mine own lot, but thou, my child, shouldst move
As a light breeze of heaven, through summer-bowers,
And not o'er foaming billows. We are fall'n
On dark and evil days!

Ximena. Ay, days that wake
All to their tasks!—Youth may not loiter now
In the green walks of spring; and womanhood
Is summon'd unto conflicts, heretofore
The lot of warrior souls. But we will take
Our toils upon us nobly! Strength is born
In the deep silence of long-suffering hearts;
Not amidst joy.

Elmina. Hast thou some secret woe,
That thus thou speak'st?

Ximena. What sorrow should be mine,
Unknown to thee?
Elmina. Alas! the baleful air
Wherewith the pestilence in darkness walks
Through the devoted city, like a blight
Amidst the rose-tints of thy cheek hath fall'n,
And wrought an early withering!—Thou hast cross'd
The paths of Death, and minister'd to those
O'er whom his shadow rested, till thine eye
Hath changed its glancing sunbeam for a still,
Deep, solemn radiance, and thy brow hath caught
A wild and high expression, which at times
Fades unto desolate calmness, most unlike
What youth's bright mien should wear. My gentle child!
I look on thee in fear!
Ximena. Thou hast no cause
To fear for me. When the wild clash of steel,
And the deep tambour, and the heavy step
Of armed men, break on our morning dreams;
When, hour by hour, the noble and the brave
Are falling round us, and we deem it much
To give them funeral rites, and call them blest
If the good sword, in its own stormy hour,
Hath done its work upon them, ere disease
Had chill'd their fiery blood;—it is no time
For the light mien wherewith, in happier hours
We trod the woodland mazes, when young leaves
Were whispering in the gale.—My Father comes—
Oh! speak of me no more. I would not shade
His princely aspect with a thought less high
Than his proud duties claim.

GONZALEZ *enters.*

Elmina. My noble lord!
Welcome from this day's toil!—It is the hour
Whose shadows, as they deepen, bring repose
Unto all weary men; and wilt not thou
Free thy mail'd bosom from the corslet's weight,
To rest at fall of eve?

Gonzalez. There may be rest
For the tired peasant when the vesper-bell
Doth send him to his cabin, and beneath
His vine and olive he may sit at eve
Watching his children's sport: but unto *him*
Who keeps the watch-place on the mountain height,
When Heaven lets loose the storms that chasten realms
—Who speaks of rest?

Ximena. My father, shall I fill
The wine-cup for thy lips, or bring the lute
Whose sound thou lovest?

Gonzalez. If there be strains of power
To rouse a spirit, which in triumphant scorn
May cast off nature's feebleness, and hold
Its proud career unshackled, dashing down
Tears and fond thoughts to earth; give voice to those!
I have need of such, Ximena! we must hear
No melting music now.

Ximena. I know all high
Heroic ditties of the elder time,
Sung by the mountain-Christians, (1) in the holds
Of th' everlasting hills, whose snows yet bear
The print of Freedom's step; and all wild strains
Wherein the dark serranos[1] teach the rocks

[1] "Serranos," mountaineers.

And the pine forests deeply to resound
The praise of later champions. Wouldst thou hear
The war-song of thine ancestor, the Cid?

Gonzalez. Ay, speak of him, for in that name is power
Such as might rescue kingdoms! Speak of him!
We are his children! They that can look back
I' th' annals of their house on such a name,
How should *they* take Dishonour by the hand,
And o'er the threshold of their fathers' halls
First lead her as a guest?

Elmina. Oh, why this?
How my heart sinks!

Gonzalez. It must not fail thee *yet*,
Daughter of heroes!—thine inheritance
Is strength to meet all conflicts. Thou canst number
In thy long line of glorious ancestry
Men, the bright offering of whose blood hath made
The ground it bathed e'en as an altar, whence
High thoughts shall rise for ever. Bore they not,
'Midst flame and sword, their witness of the Cross,
With its victorious inspiration girt
As with a conqueror's robe, till th' infidel,
O'erawed, shrank back before them?—Ay, the earth
Doth call them martyrs, but *their* agonies
Were of a moment, tortures whose brief aim
Was to destroy, within whose powers and scope
Lay naught but dust—And earth doth call them *martyrs!*
Why, Heaven but claim'd their blood, their lives, and not

The things which grow as tendrils round their hearts;
No, not their children!
Elmina. Mean'st thou?—know'st thou aught?
I cannot utter it—My sons! my sons!
Is it of them?—Oh! would'st thou speak of them?
Gonzalez. A mother's heart divineth but too well!
Elmina. Speak, I adjure thee!—I can bear it all.
—Where are my children?
Gonzalez. In the Moorish camp
Whose lines have girt the city.
Ximena. But they live?
—All is not lost, my mother!
Elmina. Say, they live.
Gonzalez. Elmina, still they live.
Elmina. But captives!—They
Whom my fond heart had imaged to itself
Bounding from cliff to cliff amidst the wilds
Where the rock-eagle seem'd not more secure
In its rejoicing freedom!—And my boys
Are captives with the Moor!—Oh! how was this?
Gonzalez. Alas! our brave Alphonso, in the pride
Of boyish daring, left our mountain-halls,
With his young brother, eager to behold
The face of noble war. Thence on their way
Were the rash wanderers captured.
Elmina. 'T is enough.
—And when shall they be ransomed?
Gonzalez. There is ask'd
A ransom far too high.
Elmina. What! have we wealth
Which might redeem a monarch, and our sons
The while wear fetters?—Take thou all for them
And we will cast our worthless grandeur from us,

As 't were a cumbrous robe!—Why, *thou* art one
To whose high nature pomp hath ever been
But as the plumage to a warrior's helm,
Worn or thrown off as lightly. And for me,
Thou know'st not how serenely I could take
The peasant's lot upon me, so my heart,
Amidst its deep affections undisturb'd,
May dwell in silence.

Ximena. Father! doubt thou not
But we will bind ourselves to poverty,
With glad devotedness, if this, but this,
May win them back.—Distrust us not, my father!
We can bear all things.

Gonzalez. Can ye bear disgrace?

Ximena. We were not *born* for this.

Gonzalez. No, thou sayest well!
Hold to that lofty faith.—My wife, my child!
Hath earth no treasures richer than the gems
Torn from her secret caverns?—If by them
Chains may be riven, then let the captive spring
Rejoicing to the light!—But he, for whom
Freedom and life may but be worn with shame,
Hath naught to do, save fearlessly to fix
His steadfast look on the majestic heavens,
And proudly die!

Elmina. Gonzalez, *who* must die?

Gonzalez (*hurriedly*). They on whose lives a fearful price is set,
But to be paid by treason!—Is 't enough?
Or must I yet seek words?

Elmina. That look saith more!
Thou canst not mean——

Gonzalez. I do! why dwells there not

Power in a glance to speak it ?—They must die!
They—must their names be told—*Our sons* must die,
Unless I yield the city!

Ximena. Oh! look up!
My mother, sink not thus!—Until the grave
Shut from our sight its victims, there is hope.

Elmina (*in a low voice.*) Whose knell was in the breeze!
—No, no, not *theirs!*
Whose was the blessed voice that spoke of hope?
—And there *is* hope!—I will not be subdued—
I will not hear a whisper of despair!
For Nature is all-powerful, and her breath
Moves like a quickening spirit o'er the depths
Within a father's heart.—Thou too, Gonzalez,
Wilt tell me there is hope!

Gonzalez (*solemnly.*) Hope but in Him
Who bade the patriarch lay his fair young son
Bound on the shrine of sacrifice, and when
The bright steel quiver'd in the father's hand
Just raised to strike, sent forth his awful voice
Through the still clouds, and on the breathless air,
Commanding to withhold!—Earth has no hope:
It rests with him.

Elmina. *Thou* canst not tell me this!
Thou father of my sons, within whose hands
Doth lie thy children's fate.

Gonzalez. If there have been
Men in whose bosoms Nature's voice hath made
Its accents as the solitary sound
Of an o'erpowering torrent, silencing
Th' austere and yet divine remonstrances

Whispered by faith and honour, lift thy hands,
And, to that Heaven, which arms the brave with strength
Pray that the father of thy sons may ne'er
Be thus found wanting!
Elmina. Then their doom is seal'd!
Thou wilt not save thy children?
Gonzalez. Hast thou cause,
Wife of my youth, to deem it lies within
The bounds of possible things, that I should link
My name to that word—*traitor?* They that sleep
On their proud battle-fields, thy sires and mine,
Died not for this!
Elmina. Oh, cold and hard of heart!
Thou shouldst be born for empire, since thy soul
Thus lightly from all human bonds can free
Its haughty flight!—Men! men! too much is yours
Of vantage; ye, that with a sound, a breath,
A shadow, thus can fill the desolate space
Of rooted-up affections, o'er whose void
Our yearning hearts must wither!—So it is,
Dominion must be won!—Nay, leave me not—
My heart is bursting, and I *must* be heard!
Heaven hath given power to mortal agony,
As to the elements in their hour of might
And mastery o'er creation!—Who shall dare
To mock that fearful strength?—I *must* be heard!
Give me my sons!
Gonzalez. That they may live to hide
With covering hands th' indignant flush of shame
On their young brows, when men shall speak of him
They called their father!—Was the oath whereby,

On th' altar of my faith, I bound myself,
With an unswerving spirit to maintain
This free and Christian city for my God
And for my king, a writing traced on sand?
That passionate tears should wash it from the earth,
Or e'en the life-drops of a bleeding heart
Efface it, as a billow sweeps away
The last light vessel's wake?—Then never more
Let man's deep vows be trusted!—though enforced
By all th' appeals of high remembrances,
And silent claims o' th' sepulchres, wherein
His fathers with their stainless glory sleep,
On their good swords! Think'st thou *I* feel no pangs?
He that hath given me sons, doth know the heart
Whose treasures he recalls.—Of this no more.
'T is vain. I tell thee that th' inviolate cross
Still, from our ancient temples, must look up
Through the blue heavens of Spain, though at its foot
I perish with my race. Thou *darest* not ask
That I, the son of warriors—men who died
To fix it on that proud supremacy—
Should tear the sign of our victorious faith
From its high place of sunbeams, for the Moor
In impious joy to trample!

Elmina. Scorn me not,
In mine extreme of misery!—Thou art strong—
Thy heart is not as mine. My brain grows wild;
I know not what I ask!—And yet 't were but
Anticipating fate—since it must fall,
That cross *must* fall at last! There is no power,
No hope within this city of the grave,
To keep its place on high. Her sultry air

Breathes heavily of death, her warriors sink
Beneath their ancient banners, ere the Moor
Hath bent his bow against them; for the shaft
Of pestilence flies more swiftly to its mark,
Than the arrow of the desert. Ev'n the skies
O'erhang the desolate splendour of her domes
With an ill omen's aspect, shaping forth,
From the dull clouds, wild menacing forms and signs
Foreboding ruin. *Man* might be withstood,
But who shall cope with famine and disease,
When leagued with armed foes!—where now the aid,
Where the long-promised lances of Castile!
—We are forsaken, in our utmost need,
By heaven and earth forsaken!

Gonzalez. If this be,
(And yet I will not deem it) we must fall
As men that in severe devotedness
Have chosen their part and bound themselves to death,
Through high conviction that their suffering land,
By the free blood of martyrdom alone,
Shall call deliverance down.

Elmina. Oh! I have stood
Beside thee through the beating storms of life,
With the true heart of unrepining love,
As the poor peasant's mate doth cheerily
In the parch'd vineyard, or the harvest-field,
Bearing her part, sustain with him the heat
And burden of the day. But now the hour
The heavy hour is come, when human strength
Sinks down, a toil-worn pilgrim, in the dust,
Owning that woe is mightier!—Spare me yet
This bitter cup, my husband!—Let not her,

The mother of the lovely, sit and mourn
In her unpeopled home, a broken stem,
O'er its fallen roses dying!

Gonzalez. Urge me not,
Thou that through all sharp conflicts hast been found
Worthy a brave man's love, oh! urge me not
To guilt, which, through the mist of blinding tears,
In its own hues thou seest not!—Death may scarce
Bring aught like this!

Elmina. All, all thy gentle race,
The beautiful beings that around thee grew,
Creatures of sunshine! Wilt thou doom them all?
—She, too, thy daughter—doth her smile unmark'd
Pass from thee, with its radiance, day by day?
Shadows are gathering round her—seest thou not?
The misty dimness of the spoiler's breath
Hangs o'er her beauty, and the face which made
The summer of our hearts, now doth but send,
With every glance, deep bodings through the soul,
Telling of early fate.

Gonzalez. I see a change
Far nobler on her brow!—She is as one,
Who, at the trumpet's sudden call, hath risen
From the gay banquet, and in scorn cast down
The wine-cup, and the garland, and the lute,
Of festal hours, for the good spear and helm,
Beseeming sterner tasks.—Her eye hath lost
The beam which laugh'd upon th' awakening heart,
E'en as morn breaks o'er earth. But far within
Its full dark orb, a light hath sprung, whose source
Lies deeper in the soul.—And let the torch
Which but illumed the glittering pageant, fade!
The altar-flame, i' th' sanctuary's recess,

Burns quenchless, being of heaven!—She hath put on
Courage, and faith, and generous constancy,
Ev'n as a breastplate.—Ay, men look on her,
As she goes forth serenely to her tasks,
Binding the warrior's wounds, and bearing fresh
Cool draughts to fever'd lips; they look on her,
Thus moving in her beautiful array
Of gentle fortitude, and bless the fair
Majestic vision, and unmurmuring turn
Unto their heavy toils.

Elmina. And seest thou not
In that high faith and strong collectedness,
A fearful inspiration?—*They* have cause
To tremble, who behold th' unearthly light
Of high, and, it may be, prophetic thought,
Investing youth with grandeur!—From the grave
It rises, on whose shadowy brink thy child
Waits but a father's hand to snatch her back
Into the laughing sunshine.—Kneel with me,
Ximena, kneel beside me, and implore
That which a deeper, more prevailing voice
Than ours doth ask, and will not be denied;
—His children's lives!

Ximena. Alas! this may not be,
Mother!—I cannot. [*Exit* XIMENA.

Gonzalez. My heroic child!
—A terrible sacrifice thou claim'st, O God!
From creatures in whose agonizing hearts
Nature is strong as death.

Elmina. Is't thus in thine?
Away!—what time is given thee to resolve
On?—what I cannot utter!—Speak! thou know'st
Too well what I would say.

Gonzalez. Until—ask not!
The time is brief.
Elmina. Thou said'st—I heard not right—
Gonzalez. The time is brief.
Elmina. What! must we burst all ties
Wherewith the thrilling chords of life are twined;
And, for this task's fulfilment, can it be
That man, in his cold heartlessness, hath dared
To number and to mete us forth the sands
Of hours, nay, moments?—Why, the sentenced wretch,
He on whose soul there rests a brother's blood
Pour'd forth in slumber, is allow'd more time
To wean his turbulent passions from the world
His presence doth pollute!—It is not thus!
We must have time to school us.
Gonzalez. We have but
To bow the head in silence, when Heaven's voice
Calls back the things we love.
Elmina. Love! Love!—there are soft smiles and gentle words,
And there are faces, skilful to put on
The look we trust in—and 'tis mockery all!
—A faithless mist, a desert-vapour, wearing
The brightness of clear waters, thus to cheat
The thirst that semblance kindled!—There is none
In all this cold and hollow world, no fount
Of deep, strong, deathless love, save that within
A mother's heart.—It is but pride, wherewith
To his fair son the father's eye doth turn
Watching his growth. Ay, on the boy he looks,
The bright glad creature springing in his path,
But as the heir of his great name, the young
And stately tree, whose rising strength ere long

Shall bear his trophies well.—And this is love!
This is *man's* love!—What marvel?—*you* ne'er made
Your breast the pillow of his infancy,
While to the fulness of your heart's glad heavings
His fair cheek rose and fell; and his bright hair
Waved softly to your breath!—*You* ne'er kept watch
Beside him, till the last pale star had set,
And morn, all dazzling, as in triumph, broke
On your dim weary eye; not *yours* the face
Which early faded through fond care for him,
Hung o'er his sleep, and duly as Heaven's light,
Was there to greet his wakening! *You* ne'er smoothed
His couch, ne'er sung him to his rosy rest,
Caught his least whisper, when his voice from yours
Had learned soft utterance; pressed your lips to his
When fever parch'd it; hush'd his wayward cries,
With patient, vigilant, never-wearied love!
No! these are *woman's* tasks!—In these her youth,
And bloom of cheek, and buoyancy of heart,
Steal from her all unmark'd!—My boys! my boys!
Hath vain affection borne with all for this?
—Why were ye given me?

Gonzalez. Is there strength in man
Thus to endure?—That thou couldst read, thro' all
Its depths of silent agony, the heart
Thy voice of woe doth rend!

Elmina. Thy heart! *thy* heart!—Away! it feels not *now!*
But an hour comes to tame the mighty man
Unto the infant's weakness; nor shall Heaven
Spare you that bitter chastening!—May you live
To be alone, when loneliness doth seem
Most heavy to sustain!—For me, my voice

Of prayer and fruitless weeping shall be soon
With all forgotten sounds; my quiet place
Low with my lovely ones, and we shall sleep,
Though kings lead armies o'er us; we shall sleep,
Wrapt in earth's covering mantle! you the while
Shall sit within your vast, forsaken halls,
And hear the wild and melancholy winds
Moan through their drooping banners, never more
To wave above your race. Ay, then call up
Shadows—dim phantoms from ancestral tombs,
But all—all *glorious*—conquerors, chieftains, kings
—To people that cold void! And when the strength
From your right arm hath melted, when the blast
Of the shrill clarion gives your heart no more
A fiery wakening; if at last you pine
For the glad voices, and the bounding steps,
Once through your home re-echoing, and the clasp
Of twining arms, and all the joyous light
Of eyes that laugh'd with youth, and made your board
A place of sunshine;—When those days are come,
Then, in your utter desolation, turn
To the cold world, the smiling, faithless world,
Which hath swept past you long, and bid it quench
Your soul's deep thirst with *fame!* immortal *fame!*
Fame to the sick of heart!—a gorgeous robe,
A crown of victory, unto him that dies
I' th' burning waste, for water!

Gonzalez. This from *thee!*
Now the last drop of bitterness is pour'd.
Elmina—I forgive thee! [*Exit* Elmina.
Aid me, Heaven!
From whom alone is power!—Oh! thou hast set

Duties, so stern of aspect, in my path,
They almost, to my startled gaze, assume
The hue of things less hallow'd! Men have sunk
Unblamed beneath such trials!—Doth not He
Who made us, know the limits of our strength?
My wife! my sons!—Away! I must not pause
To give my heart one moment's mastery thus!

[*Exit* GONZALEZ.

Scene — The Aisle of a Gothic Church.

HERNANDEZ, GARCIAS, *and others.*

Hernandez. The rites are closed. Now, valiant men, depart,
Each to his place — I may not say, of rest;
Your faithful vigils for your sons may win
What must not be your own. Ye are those
Who sow, in peril and in care, the seed
Of the fair tree, beneath whose stately shade
They may not sit. But bless'd be they who toil
For after-day!—All high and holy thoughts
Be with you, warriors, thro' the lingering hours
Of the night-watch!

Garcias. Ay, father! we have need
Of high and holy thoughts, wherewith to fence
Our hearts against despair. Yet have I been
From youth a son of war. The stars have look'd
A thousand times upon my couch of heath,
Spread 'midst the wild sierras, by some stream
Whose dark-red waves look'd e'en as though their source

Lay not in rocky caverns, but the veins
Of noble hearts; while many a knightly crest
Roll'd with them to the deep. And in the years
Of my long exile and captivity,
With the fierce Arab, I have watch'd beneath
The still, pale shadow of some lonely palm,
At midnight, in the desert; while the wind
Swell'd with the lion's roar, and heavily
The fearfulness and might of solitude
Press'd on my weary heart.

Hernandez (*thoughtfully.*) Thou little know'st
Of what is solitude!—I tell thee, those
For whom—in earth's remotest nook—howe'er
Divided from their path by chain on chain
Of mighty mountains, and the amplitude
Of rolling seas—there beats one human heart,
There breathes one being unto whom their name
Comes with a thrilling and a gladdening sound,
Heard o'er the din of life! are not alone!
Not on the deep, nor in the wild, alone;
For there is that on earth with which they hold
A brotherhood of soul!—Call *him* alone,
Who stands shut out from this!—And let those
Whose homes are bright with sunshine and with love
Put on the insolence of happiness,
Glorying in that proud lot!—A lonely hour
Is on its way to each, to all; for Death
Knows no companionship.

Garcias. I have look'd on Death
In field, and storm, and flood. But never yet
Hath aught weigh'd down my spirit to a mood
Of sadness, dreaming o'er dark auguries,
Like this, our watch by midnight. Fearful things

Are gathering round us. Death upon the earth,
Omens in heaven!—The summer-skies put forth
No clear bright stars above us, but at times,
Catching some comet's fiery hue of wrath,
Marshal their clouds to armies, traversing
Heaven with the rush of meteor steeds, the array
Of spears and banners, tossing like the pines
Of Pyrenean forests, when the storm
Doth sweep the mountains.

Hernandez. Ay, last night, I too
Kept vigil, gazing on the angry heavens;
And I beheld the meeting and the shock
Of those wild hosts i' th' air, when, as they closed,
A red and sultry mist, like that which mantles
The thunder's path, fell o'er them. Then were flung
Through the dull glare, broad cloudy banners forth,
And chariots seem'd to whirl, and steeds to sink,
Bearing down crested warriors. But all this
Was dim and shadowy;—then swift darkness rush'd
Down on th' unearthly battle, as the deep
Swept o'er the Egyptian's armament.—I look'd—
And all that fiery field of plumes and spears
Was blotted from heaven's face!—I look'd again
—And from the brooding mass of clouds leap'd forth
One meteor-sword, which o'er the reddening sea
Shook with strange motion, such as earthquakes give
Unto a rocking citadel!—I beheld,
And yet my spirit sunk not.

Garcias. Neither deem
That mine hath blench'd.—But these are sights and sounds
To awe the firmest.—Know'st thou what we hear
At midnight from the walls?—Were 't but the deep

Barbaric horn or Moorish tambour's peal,
Thence might the warrior's heart catch impulses,
Quickening its fiery currents. But our ears
Are pierced by other tones. We hear the knell
For brave men in their noon of strength cut down,
And the shrill wail of woman, and the dirge
Faint swelling through the streets. Then e'en the air
Hath strange and fitful murmurs of lament,
As if the viewless watchers of the land
Sigh'd on its hollow breezes!—To my soul,
The torrent-rush of battle, with its din
Of trampling steeds and ringing panoply,
Were, after these faint sounds of drooping woe,
As the free sky's glad music unto him
Who leaves a couch of sickness.

Hernandez (*with solemnity.*) If to plunge
In the mid-waves of combat, as they bear
Chargers and spearmen onwards; and to make
A reckless bosom's front the buoyant mark
On that wild current, for ten thousand arrows;
If *thus* to dare were valour's noblest aim,
Lightly might fame be won!—but there are things
Which ask a spirit of more exalted pitch,
And courage temper'd with a holier fire!
Well may'st thou say, that these are fearful times;
Therefore be firm, be patient!—There is strength,
And a fierce instinct, e'en in common souls,
To bear up manhood with a stormy joy,
When red swords meet in lightning!—but our task
Is more, and nobler!—We have to endure,
And to keep watch, and to arouse a land,
And to defend an altar!—If we fall,
So that our blood make but the millionth part

Of Spain's great ransom, we may count it joy
To die upon her bosom, and beneath
The banner of her faith!—Think but on this,
And gird your hearts with silent fortitude,
Suffering, yet hoping all things—Fare ye well.

Garcias. Father, farewell. [*Exeunt* GARCIAS *and his followers.*

Hernandez. These men have earthly ties
And bondage on their natures!—To the cause
Of God, and Spain's revenge, they bring but half
Their energies and hopes. But he whom Heaven
Hath call'd to be th' awakener of a land,
Should have his soul's affections all absorb'd
In that majestic purpose, and press on
To its fulfilment, as a mountain-born
And mighty stream, with all its vassal rills
Sweeps proudly to the ocean, pausing not
To dally with the flowers.
Hark! what quick step
Comes hurrying through the gloom at this dead hour?

ELMINA *enters.*

Elmina. Are not all hours as one to misery?—Why
Should *she* take note of time, for whom the day
And night have lost their blessed attributes
Of sunshine and repose?

Hernandez. I know thy griefs;
But there are trials for the noble heart
Wherein its own deep fountains must supply
All it can hope of comfort. Pity's voice
Comes with vain sweetness to th' unheeding ear

Of anguish, e'en as music heard afar
On the green shore, by him who perishes
'Midst rocks and eddying waters.
Elmina. Think thou not
I sought thee but for pity. I am come
For that which grief is privileged to demand
With an imperious claim, from all whose form,
Whose human form, doth seal them unto suffering!
Father! I ask thine *aid.*
Hernandez. There is no aid
For thee or for thy children, but with Him
Whose presence is around us in the cloud,
As in the shining and the glorious light.
Elmina. There is no aid!—Art thou a man of God?
Art thou a man of sorrow, (for the world
Doth call thee such) and hast thou not been taught
By God and sorrow—mighty as they are,
To own the claims of misery?
Hernandez. Is there power
With me to save thy sons?—Implore of Heaven!
Elmina. Doth not Heaven work its purposes by man?
I tell thee, *thou* canst save them!—Art thou not
Gonzalez' counsellor?—Unto him thy words
Are e'en as oracles——
Hernandez. And therefore?—Speak!
The noble daughter of Pelayo's line
Hath naught to ask, unworthy of the name
Which is a nation's heritage.—Dost thou shrink?
Elmina. Pity on me, father!—I must speak
That, from the thought of which, but yesterday,
I had recoil'd in scorn!—But this is past.
Oh! we grow humble in our agonies,
And to the dust—their birth-place—bow the heads

That wore the crown of glory! — I am weak —
My chastening is far more than I can bear.

Hernandez. These are no times for weakness. On our hills,
The ancient cedars, in their gather'd might,
Are battling with the tempest; and the flower
Which cannot meet its driving blast must die.
—But thou hast drawn thy nurture from a stem
Unwont to bend or break — Lift thy proud head,
Daughter of Spain!—What wouldst thou with thy Lord?

Elmina. Look not upon me thus!—I have no power
To tell thee. Take thy keen disdainful eye
Off from my soul! —What! am I sunk to this?
I, whose blood sprang from heroes! — How my sons
Will scorn the mother that would bring disgrace
On their majestic line! — My sons! my sons!
— Now is all else forgotten ! — I had once
A babe that in the early spring-time lay
Sickening upon my bosom, till at last,
When earth's young flowers were opening to the sun,
Death sunk on his meek eyelid, and I deem'd
All sorrow light to mine! — But now the fate
Of all my children seems to brood above me
In the dark thunder-clouds! — Oh! I have power
And voice unfaltering now to speak my prayer,
And my last lingering hope that thou shouldst win
The father to relent, to save his sons!

Hernandez. By yielding up the city?

Elmina. Rather say,
By meeting that which gathers close upon us
Perchance one day the sooner! — Is't not so?
Must we not yield at last? — How long shall man

Array his single breast against disease,
And famine, and the sword?

Hernandez. How long?—While he,
Who shadows forth his power more gloriously
In the high deeds and sufferings of the soul,
Than in the circling heavens, with all their stars,
Or the far-sounding deep, doth send abroad
A spirit, which takes affliction for its mate,
In the good cause, with solemn joy!—How long?
And who art *thou*, that, in the littleness
Of thine own selfish purpose, would'st set bounds
To the free current of all noble thought
And generous action, bidding its bright waves
Be stay'd, and flow no further?—But the Power
Whose interdict is laid on seas and orbs,
To chain them in from wandering, hath assign'd
No limits unto that which man's high strength
Shall, through its aid, achieve!

Elmina. Oh! there are times,
When *all* that hopeless courage can achieve
But sheds a mournful beauty o'er the fate
Of those who die in vain.

Hernandez. *Who* dies in vain
Upon his country's war-fields, and within
The shadow of her altars?—Feeble heart!
I tell thee that the voice of noble blood,
Thus pour'd for faith and freedom, hath a tone
Which from the night of ages, from the gulf
Of death shall burst, and make its high appeal
Sound unto earth and heaven! Ay, let the land,
Whose sons through centuries of woe have striven
And perish'd by her temples, sink awhile,
Borne down in conflict!—But immortal seed

Deep, by heroic suffering, hath been sown
On all her ancient hills; and generous hope
Knows that the soil, in its good time, shall yet
Bring forth a glorious harvest!—Earth receives
Not one red drop from faithful hearts in vain.

Elmina. Then it must be! And ye will make those lives,
Those young bright lives, an offering, to retard
Our doom one day!

Hernandez. The mantle of that day
May wrap the fate of Spain!

Elmina. What led me here?
Why did I turn to *thee* in my despair?
Love hath no ties upon thee; what had I
To hope from *thee*, thou lone and childless man?
Go to thy silent home!—there no young voice
Shall bid thee welcome, no light footstep spring
Forth at the sound of thine!—What knows thy heart?

Hernandez. Woman! how dar'st thou taunt me with my woes?
Thy children too shall perish, and I say
It shall be well!—Why tak'st thou thought for them?
Wearing thy heart, and wasting down thy life
Unto its dregs, and making night thy time
Of care yet more intense, and casting health,
Unpriz'd to melt away, i' th' bitter cup
Thou minglest for thyself!—Why, what hath earth
To pay thee back for this?—Shall they not live,
(If the sword spare them now) to prove how soon
All love may be forgotten? Years of thought,
Long faithful watchings, looks of tenderness,
That changed not, though to change be this world's law?

Shall they not flush thy cheeks with shame, whose blood
Marks, e'en like branding iron?—to thy sick heart
Make death a want, as sleep to weariness?
Doth not all hope end thus?—or e'en at best,
Will they not leave thee?—far from thee seek room
For th' overflowings of their fiery souls,
On life's wide ocean?—Give the bounding steed
Or the wing'd bark to youth, that his free course
May be o'er hills and seas; and weep thou not
In thy forsaken home, for the bright world
Lies all before him, and be sure he wastes
No thought on thee?

Elmina. Not so! it is not so!
Thou dost but torture me!—*My* sons are kind,
And brave, and gentle.

Hernandez. Others too have worn
The semblance of all good. Nay, stay thee yet:
I will be calm, and thou shalt learn how earth,
The fruitful in all agonies, hath woes
Which far outweigh thine own.

Elmina. It may not be—
Whose grief is like a mother's for her sons?

Hernandez. *My* son lay stretch'd upon his battle-bier,
And there were hands wrung o'er him, which had caught
Their hue from his young blood!

Elmina. What tale is this?

Hernandez. Read you no records in this mien, of things
Whose traces on man's aspect are not such
As the breeze leaves on water?—Lofty birth,

War, peril, power?—Affliction's hand is strong,
If it erase the haughty characters
They grave so deep!—I have not always been
That which I am. The name I bore is not
Of those which perish!—I was once a chief,
A warrior!—nor, as now, a lonely man!
I was a father!

Elmina. Then thy heart can *feel!*
Thou wilt have pity!

Hernandez. Should I pity *thee?*
Thy sons will perish gloriously—their blood——

Elmina. Their blood! my children's blood!—Thou speak'st as 'twere
Of casting down a wine-cup, in the mirth
And wantonness of feasting!—My fair boys!
—Man! hast *thou* been a father?

Hernandez. Let them die!
Let them die *now,* thy children! so thy heart
Shall wear their beautiful image all undimm'd,
Within it, to the last! Nor shalt thou learn
The bitter lesson, of what worthless dust
Are framed the idols, whose false glory binds
Earth's fetters on our souls!—Thou think'st it much
To mourn the early dead; but there are tears
Heavy with deeper anguish! We endow
Those whom we love, in our fond passionate blindness,
With power upon our souls, too absolute
To be a mortal's trust! Within their hands
We lay the flaming sword, whose stroke alone
Can reach our hearts, and *they* are merciful,
As they are strong, that wield it not to pierce us!
—Ay, fear them, fear the loved!—Had I but wept
O'er my son's grave, as o'er a babe's, where tears

Are as spring dew-drops, glittering in the sun,
And brightening the young verdure, *I* might still
Have loved and trusted!

Elmina (*disdainfully.*) But he fell in war!
And hath not glory medicine in her cup
For the brief pangs of nature?

Hernandez. Glory!—Peace,
And listen!—By my side the stripling grew,
Last of my line. I rear'd him to take joy
I' th' blaze of arms, as eagles train their young
To look upon the day-king—His quick blood
E'en to his boyish cheek would mantle up,
When the heavens rang with trumpets, and his eye
Flash with the spirit of a race whose deeds—
But this availeth not!—Yet he *was* brave.
I've seen him clear himself a path in fight
As lightning through a forest, and his plume
Waved like a torch, above the battle-storm,
The soldier's guide, when princely crests had sunk,
And banners were struck down—Around my steps
Floated his fame, like music, and I lived
But in the lofty sound. But when my heart
In one frail ark had ventured all, when most
He seem'd to stand between my soul and heaven,
—Then came the thunder-stroke!

Elmina. 'Tis ever thus!
And the unquiet and foreboding sense
That thus 'twill ever be, doth link itself
Darkly with all deep love!—He died?

Hernandez. Not so!
—Death! Death!—Why, earth should be a paradise,
To make that name so fearful! Had he died,
With his young fame about him for a shroud,

I had not learn'd the might of agony,
To bring proud natures low!—No! he fell off—
—Why do I tell thee this?—What right hast *thou*
To learn how pass'd the glory from my house?
Yet listen!—He forsook me!—He, that was
As mine own soul, forsook me!—trampled o'er
The ashes of his sires!—Ay, leagued himself
E'en with the infidel, the curse of Spain,
And, for the dark eye of a Moorish maid,
Abjured his faith, his God!—Now, talk of death!

Elmina. Oh! I can pity thee——

Hernandez. There 's more to hear.
I braced the corslet o'er my heart's deep wound,
And cast my troubled spirit on the tide
Of war and high events, whose stormy waves
Might bear it up from sinking;——

Elmina. And ye met
No more?

Hernandez. Be still!—We did!—we met *once* more.
God had his own high purpose to fulfil,
Or think'st thou that the sun in his bright heaven
Had look'd upon such things?—We met *once more.*
—That was an hour to leave its lightning-mark
Sear'd upon brain and bosom!—there had been
Combat on Ebro's banks, and when the day
Sank in red clouds, it faded from a field
Still held by Moorish lances. Night closed round,
A night of sultry darkness, in the shadow
Of whose broad wing, e'en unto death I strove
Long with a turban'd champion; but my sword
Was heavy with God's vengeance—and prevail'd.
He fell—my heart exulted—and I stood

In gloomy triumph o'er him — Nature gave
No sign of horror, for 'twas Heaven's decree!
He strove to speak — but I had done the work
Of wrath too well — yet in his last deep moan
A dreadful something of familiar sound
Came o'er my shuddering sense — The moon look'd forth,
And I beheld — speak not! — 'twas he — my son!
My boy lay dying there! He raised one glance,
And knew me — for he sought with feeble hand
To cover his glazed eyes. A darker veil
Sank o'er them soon — I will not have thy look
Fix'd on me thus! — away!
Elmina. Thou hast seen this,
Thou hast *done* this — and yet thou liv'st?
Hernandez. I live!
And know'st thou wherefore? — On my soul there fell
A horror of great darkness, which shut out
All earth, and heaven, and hope. I cast away
The spear and helm, and made the cloister's shade
The home of my despair. But a deep voice
Came to me through the gloom, and sent its tones
Far through my bosom's depths. And I awoke,
Ay, as the mountain cedar doth shake off
Its weight of wintry snow, e'en so I shook
Despondence from my soul, and knew myself
Seal'd by that blood wherewith my hands were dyed,
And set apart, and fearfully mark'd out
Unto a mighty task! — To rouse the soul
Of Spain, as from the dead; and to lift up
The cross, her sign of victory, on the hills,
Gathering her sons to battle! — And my voice
Must be as freedom's trumpet on the winds,

From Roncesvalles to the blue sea-waves
Where Calpe looks on Afric; till the land
Have fill'd her cup of vengeance!—Ask me *now*
To yield the Christian city, that its fanes
May rear the minaret in the face of heaven!
—But death shall have a bloodier vintage-feast
Ere that day come!

Elmina. I ask thee this no more,
For I am hopeless now—But yet one boon—
Hear me, by all thy woes!—Thy voice hath power
Through the wide city—here I cannot rest:—
Aid me to pass the gates!

Hernandez. And wherefore?

Elmina. Thou,
That *wert* a father, and art now—alone!
Canst *thou* ask 'wherefore?'—Ask the wretch whose sands
Have not an hour to run, whose failing limbs
Have but one earthly journey to perform,
Why, on his pathway to the place of death,
Ay, when the very axe is glistening cold
Upon his dizzy sight, his pale, parch'd lip
Implores a cup of water?—Why, the stroke
Which trembles o'er him in itself shall bring
Oblivion of all wants, yet who denies
Nature's last prayer?—I tell thee that the thirst
Which burns my spirit up is agony
To be endured no more!—And I *must* look
Upon my children's faces, I must hear
Their voices, ere they perish!—But hath Heaven
Decreed that they *must* perish?—Who shall say
If in yon Moslem camp there beats no heart
Which prayers and tears may melt?

Hernandez. There!—with the Moor!
Let him fill up the measure of his guilt!
—'Tis madness all!—How would'st thou pass the array
Of armed foes?

Elmina. Oh! free doth sorrow pass,
Free and unquestion'd, through a suffering world! (2)

Hernandez. This must not be. Enough of woe is laid
E'en now, upon thy lord's heroic soul,
For man to bear, unsinking. Press thou not
Too heavily th' o'erburthen'd heart.—Away!
Bow down the knee, and send thy prayers for strength
Up to Heaven's gate.—Farewell! [*Exit* HERNANDEZ.

Elmina. Are all men thus?
—Why, wer't not better they should fall e'en now
Than live to shut their hearts, in haughty scorn,
Against the sufferer's pleadings?—But no, no!
Who can be like *this* man, that slew his son,
Yet wears his life still proudly, and a soul
Untamed upon his brow? (*After a pause.*)
There 's one, whose arms
Have borne my children in their infancy,
And on whose knees they sported, and whose hand
Hath led them oft—a vassal of their sire's:
And I will seek him: he may lend me aid,
When all beside pass on.

DIRGE HEARD WITHOUT.

Thou to thy rest art gone,
High heart! and what are we,
While o'er our head the storm sweeps on,
That we should mourn for thee?

Free grave and peaceful bier
To the buried son of Spain!
To those that live, the lance and spear,
And well if not the chain!

Be *theirs* to weep the dead
As they sit beneath their vines,
Whose flowery land hath borne no tread
Of spoilers o'er its shrines!

Thou hast thrown off the load
Which we must yet sustain,
And pour our blood where *thine* hath flow'd,
Too blest if not in vain!

We give thee holy rite,
Slow knell, and chanted strain!
—For those that fall to-morrow night
May be left no funeral train.

Again, when trumpets wake,
We must brace our armour on;
But a deeper note *thy* sleep must break—
—Thou to thy rest art gone!

Happier in *this* than all
That, now thy race is run,
Upon thy name no stain may fall,
Thy work hath well been done.

Elmina. "Thy work hath well been done!"—
so thou mayst rest!
—There is a solemn lesson in those words—
But now I may not pause.

[*Exit* ELMINA.

Scene—A Street in the City.

HERNANDEZ, GONZALEZ.

Hernandez. Would they not hear?

Gonzalez. They heard, as one that stands
By the cold grave which hath but newly closed
O'er his last friend, doth hear some passer-by
Bid him be comforted!—Their hearts have died
Within them:—We must perish, not as those
That fall when battle's voice doth shake the hills,
And peal through Heaven's great arch, but silently,
And with a wasting of the spirit down,
A quenching, day by day, of some bright spark,
Which lit us on our toils!—Reproach me not;
My soul is darken'd with a heavy cloud—
—Yet fear not I shall yield!

Hernandez. Breathe not the word,
Save in proud scorn;—Each bitter day, o'erpass'd
By slow endurance, is a triumph won
For Spain's red cross. And be of trusting heart!
A few brief hours, and those who turn'd away
In cold despondence, shrinking from your voice,
May crowd around their leader, and demand
To be array'd for battle. We must watch
For the swift impulse, and await its time,
As the bark waits the ocean's. You have chosen
To kindle up their souls, an hour, perchance,
When they were weary. They had cast aside
Their arms to slumber; or a knell, just then
With its deep hollow tone, had made the blood
Creep shuddering through their veins; or they had
caught

A glimpse of some new meteor, and shaped forth
Strange omens from its blaze.

Gonzalez. Alas! the cause
Lies deeper in their misery!—I have seen,
In my night's course through this beleaguer'd city,
Things, whose remembrance doth not pass away
As vapours from the mountains.—There were some,
That sat beside their dead, with eyes wherein
Grief had ta'en place of sight, and shut out all
But its own ghastly object. To my voice
Some answer'd with a fierce and bitter laugh,
As men whose agonies were made to pass
The bounds of sufferance, by some reckless word,
Dropt from the light of spirit.—Others lay—
Why should I tell thee, father! how despair
Can bring the lofty brow of manhood down
Unto the very dust?—And yet for this,
Fear not that I embrace my doom—Oh God!
That 't were *my* doom alone!—with less of fix'd
And solemn fortitude.—Lead on, prepare
The holiest rites of faith, that I by them
Once more may consecrate my sword, my life,
—But what are these?—Who hath not dearer lives
Twined with his own?—I shall be lonely soon—
Childless!—Heaven wills it so. Let us begone.
Perchance before the shrine my heart may beat
With a less troubled motion.

[*Exeunt* Gonzalez *and* Hernandez.

Scene—A tent in the Moorish Camp.

ABDULLAH, ALPHONSO, CARLOS.

Abdullah. These are bold words: but hast thou look'd on death,
Fair stripling!—On thy cheek and sunny brow
Scarce fifteen summers of their laughing course
Have left light traces. If thy shaft hath pierced
The ibex of the mountains, if thy step
Hath climb'd some eagle's nest, and thou hast made
His nest thy spoil, 't is much:—And fear'st thou not
The leader of the mighty?

Alphonso. I have been
Rear'd among fearless men, and 'midst the rocks
And the wild hills, whereon my fathers fought
And won their battles. There are glorious tales
Told of their deeds, and I have learn'd them all.
How should I fear thee, Moor?

Abdullah. So, thou hast seen
Fields, where the combat's roar hath died away
Into the whispering breeze, and where wild flowers
Bloom o'er forgotten graves!—But know'st thou aught
Of those, where sword from crossing sword strikes fire,
And leaders are borne down, and rushing steeds
Trample the life from out the mighty hearts
That ruled the storm so late?—Speak not of death,
Till thou hast look'd on such.

Alphonso. I was not born
A shepherd's son, to dwell with pipe and crook,
And peasant-men, amidst the lowly vales;
Instead of ringing clarions, and bright spears,
And crested knights!—I am of princely race,

And, if my father would have heard my suit,
I tell thee, infidel! that long ere now,
I should have seen how lances meet, and swords
Do the field's work.

Abdullah. Boy! know'st thou there are sights
A thousand times more fearful!—Men may die
Full proudly, when the skies and mountains ring
To battle-horn and tecbir.[1]—But not all
So pass away in glory. There are those,
'Midst the dead silence of pale multitudes,
Led forth in fetters—dost thou mark me, boy?—
To take their last look of th' all-gladdening sun,
And bow, perchance, the stately head of youth,
Unto the death of shame!—Hast thou seen this?—

Alphonso (*to Carlos.*) Sweet brother, God is with us—fear thou not!
We have had heroes for our sires—this man
Should not behold us tremble.

Abdullah. There are means
To tame the loftiest natures. Yet again
I ask thee, wilt thou, from beneath the walls,
Sue to thy sire for life; or wouldst thou die,
With this, thy brother?

Alphonso. Moslem! on the hills,
Around my father's castle, I have heard
The mountain-peasants, as they dress'd the vines,
Or drove the goats, by rock and torrent, home,
Singing their ancient songs; and these were all
Of the Cid Campeador; and how his sword
Tizona (3) clear'd its way through turban'd hosts
And captured Afric's kings, and how he won

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[1] "Tecbir," the war-cry of the Moors and Arabs.

Valencia from the Moor. (4)—I will not shame
The blood we draw from him!

(*A Moorish Soldier enters.*)

Soldier. Valencia's lord
Sends messengers, my chief.
Abdullah. Conduct them hither.

[*The Soldier goes out, and re-enters with* ELMINA, *disguised, and an Attendant.*]

Carlos (*springing forward to the Attendant.*) Oh!
Take me hence, Diego! take me hence
With thee, that I may see my mother's face
At morning, when I wake. Here dark-brow'd men
Frown strangely, with their cruel eyes, upon us.
Take me with thee, for thou art good and kind,
And well I know thou lov'st me, my Diego!

Abdullah. Peace, boy!—What tidings, Christian, from thy lord?
Is he grown humbler?—doth he set the lives
Of these fair nurslings at a city's worth?

Alphonso (*rushing forward impatiently.*) Say not, he doth!—Yet wherefore art thou here?
If it be so—I could weep with burning tears
For very shame!—If this *can* be, return!
Tell him, of all his wealth, his battle-spoils,
I will but ask a war-horse and a sword,
And that beside him in the mountain-chase,
And in his halls, and at his stately feasts,
My place shall be no more!—But no!—I wrong,
I wrong my father!—Moor, believe it not!
He is a champion of the cross and Spain,

Sprung from the Cid; and I too, I can die
As a warrior's high-born child!
Elmina. Alas! alas!
And wouldst thou die, thus early die, fair boy?
What hath life done to thee, that thou shouldst cast
Its flower away, in very scorn of heart,
Ere yet the blight be come?
Alphonso. That voice doth sound——
Abdullah. Stranger, who art thou? — this is mockery — speak!
Elmina (*throwing off a mantle and helmet, and embracing her sons.*) My boys! whom I have rear'd through many hours
Of silent joys and sorrows, and deep thoughts
Untold and unimagined; let me die
With you, now I have held you to my heart,
And seen once more the faces, in whose light
My soul hath lived for years!
Carlos. Sweet mother! now
Thou shalt not leave us more.
Abdullah. Enough of this!
Woman! what seek'st thou here?—How hast thou dared
To front the mighty thus amidst his hosts?
Elmina. Think'st thou there dwells no courage but in breasts
That set their mail against the ringing spears,
When helmets are struck down?—Thou little know'st
Of nature's marvels!—Chief! my heart is nerved
To make its way through things which warrior men,
—Ay, they that master death by field or flood,
Would look on, ere they braved!—I have no thought,
No sense of fear!—Thou'rt mighty; but a soul

Wound up like mine, is mightier, in the power
Of that one feeling, pour'd through all its depths,
Than monarchs with their hosts!—Am I not come
To die with these, my children?

Abdullah. Doth thy faith
Bid thee do this, fond Christian?—Hast thou not
The means to save them?

Elmina. I have prayers, and tears,
And agonies!—and he—my God—the God
Whose hand, or soon or late, doth find its hour
To bow the crested head—hath made these things
Most powerful in a world where all must learn
That one deep language, by the storm call'd forth
From the bruis'd reeds of earth!—For thee, perchance,
Affliction's chastening lesson hath not yet
Been laid upon thy heart, and thou may'st love
To see the creatures, by its might brought low,
Humbled before thee.

[*She throws herself at his feet.*
Conqueror! I can kneel!
I, that drew birth from princes, bow myself
E'en to thy feet! Call in thy chiefs, thy slaves,
If this will swell thy triumph, to behold
The blood of kings, of heroes, thus debased!
Do this, but spare my sons!

Alphonso (*attempting to raise her.*) Thou shouldst not kneel
Unto this infidel!—Rise, rise, my mother!
This sight doth shame our house.

Abdullah. Thou daring boy!
They that in arms have taught thy father's land
How chains are worn, shall school that haughty mien
Unto another language.

Elmina. Peace, my son;
Have pity on my heart!—Oh, pardon, Chief—
He is of noble blood!—Hear, hear me yet!
Are there no lives through which the shafts of Heaven
May reach your soul?—He that loves aught on earth,
Dares far too much, if he be merciless!
Is it for those, whose frail mortality
Must one day strive alone with God and death,
To shut their souls against th' appealing voice
Of nature in her anguish?—Warrior! man!
To you too, ay, and haply with your hosts,
By thousands and ten thousands marshall'd round,
And your strong armour on, shall come that stroke
Which the lance wards not—Where shall your high heart
Find refuge then, if in the day of might
Woe hath laid prostrate, bleeding at your feet,
And you have pitied not?

Abdullah. These are vain words.

Elmina. Have you no children?—Fear you not to bring
The lightning on their heads?—In your own land
Doth no fond mother, from the tents, beneath
Your native palms, look o'er the deserts out,
To greet your homeward step?—You have not yet
Forgot so utterly her patient love—
—For is not woman's, in all climes, the same!—
That you should scorn *my* prayer!—Oh Heaven! his eye
Doth wear no mercy!

Abdullah. Then it mocks you not.
I have swept o'er the mountains of your land,
Leaving my traces, as the visitings

Of storms, upon them!—Shall I now be stay'd?
Know, unto me it were as light a thing,
In this, my course, to quench your children's lives,
As, journeying through a forest, to break off
The wild young branches that obstruct the way
With their green sprays and leaves.

Elmina. Are there such hearts
Among thy works, oh God?

Abdullah. Kneel not to me.
Kneel to your lord; on his resolves doth hang
His children's doom. He may be lightly won
By a few bursts of passionate tears and words.

Elmina (*rising indignantly.*) Speak not of noble men!—he bears a soul
Stronger than love or death.

Alphonso (*with exultation.*) I knew 'twas thus—
He could not fail!

Elmina. There is no mercy, none,
On this cold earth!—To strive with such a world,
Hearts should be void of love. We will go hence,
My children, we are summon'd. Lay your heads,
In their young radiant beauty, once again
To rest upon this bosom. He that dwells
Beyond the clouds which press us darkly round,
Will yet have pity, and before his face
We three will stand together! Moslem! now
Let the stroke fall at once.

Abdullah. 'Tis thine own will.
These might e'en yet be spared.

Elmina. *Thou* wilt not spare;
And he beneath whose eye their childhood grew,
And in whose paths they sported, and whose ear
From their first lisping accents caught the sound

Of that word — *Father* — once a man of love —
Is —— Men shall call him *steadfast.*
Abdullah. Hath the blast
Of sudden trumpets ne'er at dead of night,
When the land's watchers fear'd no hostile step,
Startled the slumberers from their dreamy world,
In cities, whose heroic lords have been
Steadfast as thine?
Elmina. There 's meaning in thine eye,
More than thy words.
Abdullah (*pointing to the city.*) Look to yon towers and walls!
Think you no hearts within their limits pine,
Weary of hopeless warfare, and prepared
To burst the feeble links which bind them still
Unto endurance?
Elmina. Thou hast said too well.
But what of this?
Abdullah. Then there are those, to whom
The prophet's armies not as foes would pass
Yon gates, but as deliverers. Might they not,
In some still hour, when weariness takes rest,
Be won to welcome us? Your children's steps
May yet bound lightly through their father's halls.
Alphonso (*indignantly.*) Thou treacherous Moor!
Elmina. Let me not thus be tried
Beyond all strength, oh Heaven!
Abdullah. Now 't is for *thee,*
Thou Christian mother, on thy sons to pass
The sentence — life or death — the price is set
On their young blood, and rests within thy hands.
Alphonso. Mother, thou tremblest!
Abdullah. Hath thy heart resolved?

Elmina (*covering her face with her hands.*)
My boy's proud eye is on me, and the things
Which rush in stormy darkness, through my soul,
Shrink from his glance. I cannot answer *here.*
Abdullah. Come forth. We'll commune elsewhere.
Carlos (*to his mother.*) Wilt thou go?
Oh, let me follow thee!
Elmina. Mine own fair child!
Now that thine eyes have pour'd once more on mine
The light of their young smile, and thy sweet voice
Hath sent its gentle music through my soul,
And I have felt the twining of thine arms—
—How shall I leave thee?
Abdullah. Leave him, as 't were but
For a brief slumber, to behold his face
At morning, with the sun's.
Alphonso. Thou hast no look
For me, my mother?
Elmina. Oh, that I should live
To say, I *dare* not look on thee!—Farewell,
My first-born, fare thee well.
Alphonso. Yet, yet beware!
It were a grief more heavy on thy soul,
That I should blush for thee, than o'er my grave
That thou shouldst proudly weep.
Abdullah. Away! we trifle here. The night wanes fast.
Come forth.
Elmina. One more embrace—My sons, farewell.
[*Exeunt* Abdullah *with* Elmina *and her Attendant.*
Alphonso. Hear me yet once, my mother!
Art thou gone?
But one word more.
[*He rushes out, followed by* Carlos.

Scene — The Garden of a Palace in Valencia.

XIMENA, THERESA.

Theresa. Stay yet awhile. A purer air doth rove
Here through the myrtles whispering, and the limes,
And shaking sweetness from the orange boughs,
Than waits you in the city.

Ximena. There are those
In their last need, and on their bed of death,
At which no hand doth minister but mine,
That wait me in the city. Let us hence.

Theresa. You have been wont to love the music made
By founts, and rustling foliage, and soft winds,
Breathing of citron-groves. And will you turn
From these to scenes of death?

Ximena. To me the voice
Of summer, whispering through young flowers and leaves,
Now speaks too deep a language; and of all
Its dreamy and mysterious melodies,
The breathing soul is sadness. — I have felt
That summons through my spirit, after which
The hues of earth are changed, and all her sounds
Seem fraught with secret warnings. There is cause
That I should bend my footsteps to the scenes
Where death is busy, taming warrior-hearts,
And pouring winter through the fiery blood,
And fettering the strong arm. — For now no sigh
In the dull air, nor floating cloud in heaven,
No, not the lightest murmur of a leaf,
But of his angel's silent coming bears

Some token to my soul. But naught of this
Unto my mother.—These are awful hours!
And on their heavy steps, afflictions crowd
With such dark pressure, there is left no room
For one grief more.

Theresa. Sweet lady, talk not thus!
Your eye this morn doth wear a calmer light,
There's more of life in its clear tremulous ray
Than I have mark'd of late. Nay, go not yet;
Rest by this fountain, where the laurels dip
Their glossy leaves. A fresher gale doth spring
From the transparent waters, dashing round
Their silvery spray, with a sweet voice of coolness,
O'er the pale glistening marble. 'Twill call up
Faint bloom, if but a moment's, to your cheek.
Rest here, ere you go forth, and I will sing
The melody you love.

THERESA *sings.*

Why is the Spanish maiden's grave
So far from her own bright land?
The sunny flowers that o'er it wave
Were sown by no kindred hand.

'Tis not the orange-bough that sends
Its breath on the sultry air,
'Tis not the myrtle-stem that bends
To the breeze of evening there!

But the Rose of Sharon's eastern bloom
By the silent dwelling fades,
And none but strangers pass the tomb,
Which the Palm of Judah shades.

The lowly cross, with flowers o'ergrown,
Marks well that place of rest;
But who hath graved, on its mossy stone,
A sword, a helm, a crest?

These are the trophies of a chief,
A lord of the axe and spear!
—Some blossom pluck'd, some faded leaf,
Should grace a maiden's bier!

Scorn not her tomb—deny not her
The honours of the brave!
O'er that forsaken sepulchre,
Banner and plume might wave.

She bound the steel, in battle tried,
Her fearless heart above,
And stood with brave men, side by side,
In the strength and faith of love!

That strength prevail'd—that faith was bless'd!
True was the javelin thrown,
Yet pierced it not her warrior's breast,
She met it with her own!

And nobly won, where heroes fell
In arms for the holy shrine,
A death which saved what she loved so well
And a grave in Palestine.

Then let the Rose of Sharon spread
Its breast to the glowing air,
And the Palm of Judah lift its head,
Green and immortal there!

And let yon gray stone, undefaced,
With its trophy mark the scene,
Telling the pilgrim of the waste,
Where Love and Death have been.

Ximena. Those notes were wont to make my heart beat quick,
As at a voice of victory; but to-day
The spirit of the song is changed, and seems
All mournful. Oh! that ere my early grave
Shuts out the sun-beam, I might hear one peal
Of the Castilian trumpet, ringing forth
Beneath my father's banner!—In that sound
Were life to you, sweet brothers!—But for me—
Come on—our tasks await us. They who know
Their hours are number'd out, have little time
To give the vague and slumberous languor way,
Which doth steal o'er them in the breath of flowers,
And whisper of soft winds.

ELMINA *enters hurriedly.*

Elmina. This air will calm my spirit, ere yet I meet
His eye, which must be met. Thou here, Ximena!
[*She starts back, on seeing* XIMENA.

Ximena. Alas! my mother! in that hurrying step
And troubled glance I read——

Elmina (*wildly.*) Thou read'st it not!
Why, who would live, if unto mortal eye
The things lay glaring, which within our hearts
We treasure up for God's?—Thou read'st it not!
I say, thou canst not!—There's not one on earth

Shall know the thoughts, which for themselves have made
And kept dark places in the very breast
Whereon he hath laid his slumber, till the hour
When the graves open.

Ximena. Mother! what is this?
Alas! your eye is wandering, and your cheek
Flush'd, as with fever! To your woes the night
Hath brought no rest.

Elmina. Rest!—who should rest?—not he
That holds one earthly blessing to his heart
Nearer than life!—No! if this world have aught
Of bright or precious, let not him who calls
Such things his own, take rest!—Dark spirits keep watch,
And they to whom fair honour, chivalrous fame,
Were as heaven's air, the vital element
Wherein they breathed, may wake, and find their souls
Made marks for human scorn!—Will they bear on
With life struck down, and thus disrobed of all
Its glorious drapery?—Who shall tell us this?
—Will *he* so bear it?

Ximena. Mother! let us kneel,
And blend our hearts in prayer!—What else is left
To mortals when the dark hour's might is on them?
—Leave us, Theresa.—Grief like this doth find
Its balm in solitude. [*Exit* Theresa.
My mother! peace
Is heaven's benignant answer to the cry
Of wounded spirits. Wilt thou kneel with me?

Elmina. Away! 'tis but for souls unstain'd to wear
Heaven's tranquil image on their depths.—The stream
Of my dark thoughts, all broken by the storm,

Reflects but clouds and lightnings!—Didst thou speak
Of peace?—'T is fled from earth!—but there is joy!
Wild, troubled joy!—And who shall know, my child!
It is no happiness?—Why, our own hearts
Will keep the secret close!—Joy, joy! if but
To leave this desolate city, with its dull
Slow knells and dirges, and to breathe again
Th' untainted mountain air!—But hush! the trees,
The flowers, the waters, must hear naught of this!
They are full of voices, and will whisper things—
—We 'll speak of it no more.

Ximena. Oh! pitying Heaven!
This grief doth shake her reason!

Elmina (*starting.*) Hark! a step!
'T is—'t is thy father's—come away—not now—
He must not see us now!

Ximena. Why should this be?

GONZALEZ *enters and detains* ELMINA.

Gonzalez. Elmina, dost thou shun me?—Have we not
E'en from the hopeful and the sunny time
When youth was as a glory round our brows,
Held on through life together?—And is this,
When eve is gathering round us, with the gloom
Of stormy clouds, a time to part our steps
Upon the darkening wild?

Elmina (*coldly.*) There needs not this.
Why shouldst thou think I shunn'd thee?

Gonzalez. Should the love
That shone o'er many years, th' unfading love,
Whose only change hath been from gladdening smiles
To mingling sorrows and sustaining strength,
Thus lightly be forgotten?

Elmina. Speak'st thou thus!
—I have knelt before thee with that very plea,
When it avail'd me not!—But there are things
Whose very breathings on the soul erase
All record of past love, save the chill sense,
Th' unquiet memory of its wasted faith,
And vain devotedness!—Ay, they that fix
Affection's perfect trust on aught of earth,
Have many a dream to start from!

Gonzalez. This is but
The wildness and the bitterness of grief,
Ere yet th' unsettled heart hath closed its long
Impatient conflicts with a mightier power,
Which makes all conflicts vain.
——Hark! was there not
A sound of distant trumpets, far beyond
The Moorish tents, and of another tone
Than th' Afric horn, Ximena?

Ximena. Oh, my father!
I know that horn too well.—'T is but the wind,
Which, with a sudden rising, bears its deep
And savage war-note from us, wafting it
O'er the far hills.

Gonzalez. Alas! this woe must be!
I do but shake my spirit from its height,
So startling it with hope!—But the dread hour
Shall be met bravely still. I can keep down
Yet for a little while—and Heaven will ask
No more—the passionate workings of my heart;
—And thine—Elmina!

Elmina. 'Tis—I am prepared.
I *have* prepared for all.

Gonzalez. Oh, well I knew

Thou wouldst not fail me!—Not in vain my soul,
Upon thy faith and courage, hath built up
Unshaken trust.

Elmina (*wildly.*) Away!—thou know'st me not!
Man dares too far: his rashness would invest
This our mortality with an attribute
Too high and awful, boasting that he knows
One human heart!

Gonzalez. These are wild words, but yet
I will not doubt thee!—Hast thou not been found
Noble in all things, pouring thy soul's light
Undimm'd o'er every trial?—And, as our fates,
So must our names be, undivided!—Thine,
I' th' record of a warrior's life, shall find
Its place of stainless honour. By his side——

Elmina. May this be borne!—How much of agony
Hath the heart room for?—Speak to me in wrath—
I can endure it!—But no gentle words!
No words of love! no praise!—Thy sword might slay,
And be more merciful!

Gonzalez. Wherefore art thou thus?
Elmina, my beloved!

Elmina. No more of love!
—Have I not said there's that within my heart,
Whereon it falls as living fire would fall
Upon an unclosed wound?

Gonzalez. Nay, lift thine eyes
That I may read *their* meaning!

Elmina. Never more
With a free soul—What have I said?—'twas naught!
Take thou no heed! The words of wretchedness
Admit not scrutiny. Wouldst thou mark the speech
Of troubled dreams?

Gonzalez. I have seen thee in the hour
Of thy deep spirit's joy, and when the breath
Of grief hung chilling round thee; in all change,
Bright health and drooping sickness; hope and fear;
Youth and decline; but never yet, Elmina
Ne'er hath thine eye till now shrunk back perturb'd
With shame or dread, from mine!

Elmina. Thy glance doth search
A wounded heart too deeply.

Gonzalez. Hast thou there
Aught to conceal?

Elmina. Who hath not?

Gonzalez. Till this hour
Thou never hadst! — Yet hear me! — by the free
And unattainted fame which wraps the dust
Of thine heroic fathers—

Elmina. This to me!
— Bring your inspiring war-notes, and your sounds
Of festal music, round a dying man!
Will his heart echo them? — But if thy words
Were spells, to call up with each lofty tone,
The grave's most awful spirits, they would stand
Powerless, before my anguish!

Gonzalez. Then, by her,
Who there looks on thee in the purity
Of her devoted youth, and o'er whose name
No blight must fall, and whose pale cheek must ne'er
Burn with that deeper tinge, caught painfully
From the quick feeling of dishonour — Speak!
Unfold this mystery! — By thy sons ——

Elmina. My sons!
And canst *thou* name them?

Gonzalez. Proudly! — Better far

They died with all the promise of their youth,
And the fair honour of their house upon them,
Than that with manhood's high and passionate soul
To fearful strength unfolded, they should live,
Barr'd from the lists of crested chivalry,
And pining in the silence of a woe,
Which from the heart shuts daylight—o'er the shame
Of those who gave them birth!—but *thou* couldst ne'er
Forget their lofty claims!

Elmina (*wildly.*) 'Twas but for them!
'Twas for them only!—Who shall dare arraign
Madness of crime?—And he who made us, knows
There are dark moments of all hearts and lives,
Which bear down reason!

Gonzalez. Thou, whom I have loved
With such high trust, as o'er our nature threw
A glory, scarce allow'd;—what hast thou done?
——Ximena, go thou hence!

Elmina. No, no! my child!
There's pity in thy look!—All other eyes
Are full of wrath and scorn!—Oh! leave me not!

Gonzalez. That I should live to see thee thus abased!
—Yet speak!—What hast thou done?

Elmina. Look to the gate!
Thou'rt worn with toil—But take no rest to-night!
The western gate!—Its watchers have been won—
The Christian city hath been bought and sold!
They will admit the Moor!

Gonzalez. They have been won!
Brave men and tried so long!—Whose work was this?

Elmina. Think'st thou all hearts like thine?—Can mothers stand
To see their children perish?

Gonzalez. Then the guilt
Was thine!

Elmina. —Shall mortal dare to call it guilt?
I tell thee, Heaven, which made all holy things,
Made naught more holy than the boundless love
Which fills a mother's heart!—I say, 'tis woe
Enough with such an aching tenderness,
To love aught earthly!—and in vain! in vain!
—We are press'd down too sorely!

Gonzalez (*in a low desponding voice.*) Now my life
Is struck to worthless ashes!—In my soul
Suspicion hath ta'en root. The nobleness
Henceforth is blotted from all human brows,
And fearful power, a dark and troublous gift,
Almost like prophecy, is pour'd upon me,
To read the guilty secrets in each eye
That once look'd bright with truth!
—Why then I have gain'd
What men call wisdom!—A new sense, to which
All tales that speak of high fidelity,
And holy courage, and proud honour, tried,
Search'd, and found steadfast, even to martyrdom,
Are food for mockery!—Why should I not cast
From my thinn'd locks the wearing helm at once,
And in the heavy sickness of my soul
Throw the sword down for ever?—Is there aught
In all this world of gilded hollowness,
Now the bright hues drop off its loveliest things,
Worth striving for again?

Ximena. Father! look up!
Turn unto me, thy child!

Gonzalez. Thy face is fair;
And hath been unto me, in other days,

As morning to the journeyer of the deep;
But now—'tis too like hers!

Elmina (*falling at his feet.*) Woe, shame and woe,
Are on me in their might!—forgive, forgive!

Gonzalez (*starting up.*) Doth the Moor deem that
I have part, or share,
Or counsel in this vileness?—Stay me not!
Let go thy hold—'tis powerless on me now—
I linger here, while treason is at work!
[*Exit* GONZALEZ.

Elmina. Ximena, dost *thou* scorn me?

Ximena. I have found
In mine own heart too much of feebleness,
Hid, beneath many foldings, from all eyes
But *His* whom naught can blind—to dare do aught
But pity thee, dear mother!

Elmina. Blessings light
On thy fair head, my gentle child, for this!
Thou kind and merciful!—My soul is faint—
Worn with long strife!—Is there aught else to do,
Or suffer, ere we die?—Oh God! my sons!
—I have betray'd them!—All their innocent blood
Is on my soul!

Ximena. How shall I comfort thee?
—Oh! hark! what sounds come deepening on the
wind,
So full of solemn hope!

(*A procession of Nuns passing across the scene, bearing relics, and chanting.*

Chant. A sword is on the land!
He that bears down young tree and glorious flower,
Death is gone forth, he walks the wind in power!

—Where is the warrior's hand?
Our steps are in the shadows of the grave,
Hear us, we perish! Father, hear, and save!

If, in the days of song,
The days of gladness, we have call'd on thee,
When mirthful voices rang from sea to sea,
And joyous hearts were strong;
Now that alike the feeble and the brave
Must cry, "We perish!"—Father! hear, and save!

The days of song are fled!
The winds come loaded, wafting dirge-notes by,
But they that linger, soon unmourn'd must die;
—The dead weep not the dead!
—Wilt thou forsake us 'midst the stormy wave?
We sink, we perish!—Father, hear, and save!

Helmet and lance are dust!
Is not the strong man wither'd from our eye?
The arm struck down that held our banners high?
—Thine is our spirit's trust!
Look through the gathering shadows of the grave!
Do we not perish?—Father, hear and save!

HERNANDEZ *enters.*

Elmina. Why comest thou, man of vengeance?—
What have I
To do with thee?—Am I not bow'd enough?
Thou art no mourner's comforter!
Hernandez. Thy lord
Hath sent me unto thee. Till this day's task
Be closed, thou daughter of the feeble heart!
He bids thee seek him not, but lay thy woes

Before Heaven's altar, and in penitence
Make thy soul's peace with God.

Elmina. Till this day's task
Be closed!—there is strange triumph in thine eyes—
Is it that I have fallen from that high place
Whereon I stood in fame?—But I can feel
A wild and bitter pride in thus being past
The power of thy dark glance!—My spirit now
Is wound about by one sole mighty grief;
Thy scorn hath lost its sting.—Thou may'st reproach—

Hernandez. I come not to reproach thee. Heaven doth work
By many agencies; and in its hour
There is no insect which the summer breeze
From the green leaf shakes trembling, but may serve
Its deep unsearchable purposes, as well
As the great ocean, or th' eternal fires,
Pent in earth's caves!—Thou hast but speeded that
Which, in th' infatuate blindness of thy heart,
Thou wouldst have trampled o'er all holy ties,
But to avert one day!

Elmina. My senses fail—
Thou saidst—speak yet again!—I could not catch
The meaning of thy words.

Hernandez. E'en now thy lord
Hath sent our foes defiance. On the walls
He stands in conference with the boastful Moor,
And awful strength is with him. Through the blood
Which, this day, must be pour'd in sacrifice,
Shall Spain be free. On all her olive-hills
Shall men set up the battle-sign of fire,
And round its blaze, at midnight, keep the sense

Of vengeance wakeful in each other's hearts
E'en with thy children's tale!

Ximena. Peace, father! peace!
Behold, she sinks!—the storm hath done its work
Upon the broken reed. Oh! lend thine aid
To bear her hence. [*They lead her away.*

Scene—A Street in Valencia. Several Groups of Citizens and Soldiers, many of them lying on the steps of a Church. Arms scattered on the ground around them.

An old Citizen. The air is sultry, as with thunder-clouds.
I left my desolate home, that I might breathe
More freely in heaven's face, but my heart feels
With this hot gloom o'erburthen'd. I have now
No sons to tend me. Which of you, kind friends,
Will bring the old man water from the fount,
To moisten his parch'd lip? [*A Citizen goes out.*

Second Citizen. This wasting siege,
Good Father Lopez, hath gone hard with you!
'Tis sad to hear no voices through the house,
Once peopled with fair sons!

Third Citizen. Why, better thus,
Than to be haunted with their famish'd cries,
E'en in your very dreams!

Old Citizen. Heaven's will be done!
These are dark times! I have not been alone
In my affliction.

Third Citizen (*with bitterness.*) Why, we have but this thought

Left for our gloomy comfort!—And 'tis well!
Ay, let the balance be awhile struck even
Between the noble's palace, and the hut
Where the worn peasant sickens!—They that bear
The humble dead unhonour'd to their homes,
Pass now i' th' street no lordly bridal train,
With its exulting music; and the wretch
Who on the marble steps of some proud hall
Flings himself down to die, in his last need
And agony of famine, doth behold
No scornful guests, with their long purple robes
To the banquet sweeping by. Why, this is just!
These are the days when pomp is made to feel
Its human mould!

Fourth Citizen. Heard you last night the sound
Of Saint Iago's bell?—How sullenly
From the great tower it peal'd!

Fifth Citizen. Ay, and 'tis said
No mortal hand was near when so it seem'd
To shake the midnight streets.

Old Citizen. Too well I know
The sound of coming fate!—'Tis ever thus
When death is on his way to make it night
In the Cid's ancient house. (5)—Oh! there are things
In this strange world of which we have all to learn
When its dark bounds are pass'd.—Yon bell, untouch'd
(Save by hands we see not) still doth speak—
—When of that line some stately head is mark'd—
With a wild hollow peal, at dead of night,
Rocking Valencia's towers. I have heard it oft,
Nor known its warning false.

Fourth Citizen. And will our chief

Buy, at the price of his fair children's blood,
A few more days of pining wretchedness
For this forsaken city?
Old Citizen. Doubt it not!
—But with that ransom he may purchase still
Deliverance for the land!—And yet 'tis sad
To think that such a race, with all its fame,
Should pass away!—For she, his daughter too,
Moves upon earth as some bright thing whose time
To sojourn there is short.
Fifth Citizen. Then woe for us
When she is gone!—Her voice—the very sound
Of her soft step was comfort as she moved
Through the still house of mourning!—Who like her
Shall give us hope again?
Old Citizen. Be still! she comes,
And with a mien how changed!—A hurrying step
And a flush'd cheek!—What may this bode?—Be still!

XIMENA *enters, with Attendants carrying a Banner.*

Ximena. Men of Valencia! in an hour like this,
What do ye here?
A Citizen. We die!
Ximena. Brave men die *now*
Girt for the toil, as travellers suddenly
By the dark night o'ertaken on their way!
These days require such death!—It is too much
Of luxury for our wild and angry times,
To fold the mantle round us and to sink
From life, as flowers that shut up silently,
When the sun's heat doth scorch them!—Hear ye not?
A Citizen. Lady! what wouldst thou with us?
Ximena. Rise and arm!

E'en now the children of your chief are led
Forth by the Moor to perish!—Shall this be?
Shall the high sound of such a name be hush'd,
I' th' land to which for ages it hath been
A battle-word, as 'twere some passing note
Of shepherd music?—Must this work be done,
And ye lie pining here, as men in whom
The pulse which God hath made for noble thought
Can so be thrill'd no longer?

Citizens. 'Tis even so!
Sickness, and toil, and grief, have breathed upon us.
Our hearts beat faint and low.

Ximena. Are ye so poor
Of soul, my countrymen! that ye can draw
Strength from no deeper source than that which sends
The red blood mantling through the joyous veins,
And gives the fleet step wings?—Why, how have age
And sensitive womanhood ere now endured,
Through pangs of searching fire, in some proud cause,
Blessing that agony?—Think ye the Power
Which bore them nobly up, as if to teach
The torturer where eternal Heaven had set
Bounds to his sway, was earthly, of this earth,
This dull mortality?—Nay, then look on me!
Death's touch hath mark'd me, and I stand among you,
As one whose place, i' th' sunshine of your world,
Shall soon be left to fill!—I say the breath
Of th' incense, floating through yon fane, shall scarce
Pass from your path before me! But even now,
I have that within me, kindling through the dust,
Which from all time hath made high deeds its voice
And token to the nations!—Look on me!
Why hath Heaven pour'd forth courage, as a flame

Wasting the womanish heart, which must be still'd
Yet sooner for its swift consuming brightness,
If not to shame your doubt, and your despair,
And your soul's torpor?—Yet, arise and arm!
It may not be too late.

A Citizen. Why, what are we,
To cope with hosts?—Thus faint, and worn, and few,
O'ernumber'd and forsaken, is't for us
To stand against the mighty?

Ximena. And for whom
Hath He, who shakes the mighty with a breath
From their high places, made the fearfulness,
And ever-wakeful presence of his power,
To the pale startled earth most manifest,
But for the weak?—Was't for the helm'd and crown'd
That suns were stay'd at noonday?—Stormy seas
As a rill parted?—Mail'd archangels sent
To wither up the strength of kings with death?
—I tell you, if these marvels have been done
'Twas for the wearied and the oppress'd of men,
They needed such!—And generous faith hath power
By her prevailing spirit, e'en yet to work
Deliverances, whose tale shall live with those
Of the great elder time!—Be of good heart!
Who is forsaken?—He that gives the thought
A place within his breast!—'Tis not for you.
—Know ye this banner?

Citizens (*murmuring to each other.*) Is she not inspired?
Doth not Heaven call us by her fervent voice?

Ximena. Know ye this banner?

Citizens. 'Tis the Cid's.

Ximena. The Cid's!

Who breathes that name but in th' exulting tone
Which the heart rings to?—Why, the very wind,
As it swells out the noble standard's fold,
Hath a triumphant sound!—The Cid's!—it moved
Even as a sign of victory through the land,
From the free skies ne'er stooping to a foe!

Old Citizen. Can ye still pause, my brethren?—
Oh! that youth
Through this worn frame were kindling once again!

Ximena. Ye linger still!—Upon this very air,
He that was born in happy hour for Spain (6)
Pour'd forth his conquering spirit!—'T was the breeze
From your own mountains which came down to wave
This banner of his battles, as it droop'd
Above the champion's death-bed. Nor even then
Its tale of glory closed.—They made no moan
O'er the dead hero, and no dirge was sung, (7)
But the deep tambour and shrill horn of war
Told when the mighty pass'd!—They wrapt him not
With the pale shroud, but braced the warrior's form
In war array, and on his barbed steed,
As for a triumph, rear'd him; marching forth
In the hush'd midnight from Valencia's walls,
Beleaguer'd then as now. All silently
The stately funeral moved:—but who was he
That follow'd, charging on the tall white horse,
And with the solemn standard, broad and pale,
Waving in sheets of snow-light?—And the cross,
The bloody cross far-blazing from his shield,
And the fierce meteor-sword? They fled, they fled!
The kings of Afric, with their countless hosts,
Were dust in his red path!—The scimetar
Was shiver'd as a reed!—For in that hour

The warrior saint that keeps the watch for Spain,
Was arm'd betimes!—And o'er that fiery field
The Cid's high banner stream'd all joyously,
For still its lord was there!

Citizens (*rising tumultuously.*) Even unto death
Again it shall be follow'd!

Ximena. Will he see
The noble stem hewn down, the beacon-light
Which his high house for ages o'er the land
Hath shone through cloud and storm, thus quench'd at once?
Will he not aid his children, in the hour
Of this their uttermost peril?—Awful power
Is with the holy dead, and there are times
When the tomb hath no chain they cannot burst!
—Is it a thing forgotten, how he woke
From its deep rest of old, remembering Spain
In her great danger?—At the night's mid-watch
How Leon started, when the sound was heard
That shook her dark and hollow-echoing streets,
As with the heavy tramp of steel-clad men,
By thousands marching through!—For he had risen!
The Campeador was on his march again,
And in his arms, and follow'd by his hosts
Of shadowy spearmen!—He had left the world
From which we are dimly parted, and gone forth
And call'd his buried warriors from their sleep,
Gathering them round him to deliver Spain;
For Afric was upon her!—Morning broke—
Day rush'd through clouds of battle; but at eve
Our God had triumph'd, and the rescued land
Sent up a shout of victory from the field,
That rock'd her ancient mountains.

The Citizens. Arm! to arms!
On to our chief! We have strength within us yet
To die with our blood roused! Now, be the word,
For the Cid's house! [*They begin to arm themselves.*

Ximena. Ye know his battle-song,
The old rude strain wherewith his bands went forth
To strike down Paynim swords! (*She sings.*)

THE CID'S BATTLE SONG.

The Moor is on his way!
With the tambour-peal and the tecbir-shout,
And the horn o'er the blue seas ringing out,
He hath marshall'd his dark array!

Shout through the vine-clad land!
That her sons on all their hills may hear,
And sharpen the point of the red wolf-spear,
And the sword for the brave man's hand!

(*The Citizens join in the song, while they continue arming themselves.*)

Banners are in the field!
The chief must rise from his joyous board,
And turn from the feast ere the wine be pour'd,
And take up his father's shield!

The Moor is on his way!
Let the peasant leave his olive-ground,
And the goats roam wild through the pine-woods round!
—There is nobler work to-day!

Send forth the trumpet's call!
Till the bridegroom cast the goblet down,
And the marriage-robe and the flowery crown,
And arm in the banquet-hall!

And stay the funeral-train!
Bid the chanted mass be hush'd awhile,
And the bier laid down in the holy aisle,
And the mourners girt for Spain!

(*They take up the banner and follow* XIMENA *out. Their voices are heard gradually dying away at a distance.*)

Ere night, must swords be red!
It is not an hour for knells and tears,
But for helmets braced, and serried spears!
To-morrow for the dead!

The Cid is in array!
His steed is barb'd, his plume waves high,
His banner is up in the sunny sky,
Now, joy for the Cross to-day!

Scene — The Walls of the City. The Plain beneath, with the Moorish Camp and Army.

GONZALEZ, GARCIAS, HERNANDEZ.

(*A wild sound of Moorish music heard from below.*)

Hernandez. What notes are these, in their deep mournfulness
So strangely wild?

Garcias. 'Tis the shrill melody
Of the Moor's ancient death-song. Well I know
The rude barbaric sound: but, till this hour,
It seem'd not fearful. Now, a shuddering chill
Comes o'er me with its tones. — Lo! from yon tent
They lead the noble boys!

Hernandez. The young, and pure,

And beautiful victims! — 'T is on things like these
We cast our hearts in wild idolatry,
Sowing the winds with hope! — Yet this is well.
Thus brightly crown'd with life's most gorgeous flowers,
And all unblemish'd, earth should offer up
Her treasures unto heaven!

Garcias (*to Gonzalez.*) My chief, the Moor
Hath led your children forth.

Gonzalez (*starting.*) Are my sons there?
I knew they could not perish; for yon heaven
Would ne'er behold it! — Where is he that said
I was no more a father? — They look changed —
Pallid and worn, as from a prison-house!
Or is 't mine eye sees dimly? — But their steps
Seem heavy, as with pain — I hear the clank —
Oh God! their limbs are fetter'd!

Abdullah (*coming forward beneath the walls.*) Christian, look
Once more upon thy children. There is yet
One moment for the trembling of the sword:
Their doom is still with thee.

Gonzalez. Why should this man
So mock us with the semblance of our kind?
— Moor! Moor! thou dost too daringly provoke,
In thy bold cruelty, th' all-judging One,
Who visits for such things! — Hast thou no sense
Of thy frail nature? — 'T will be taught thee yet,
And darkly shall the anguish of my soul,
Darkly and heavily, pour itself on thine,
When thou shalt cry for mercy from the dust,
And be denied!

Abdullah. Nay, is it not thyself
That hast no mercy and no love within thee?
These are thy sons, the nurslings of thy house;
Speak! must they live or die?

Gonzalez (*in violent emotion.*) Is it Heaven's will
To try the dust it kindles for a day,
With infinite agony!—How have I drawn
This chastening on my head!—They bloom'd around me,
And my heart grew too fearless in its joy,
Glorying in their bright promise!—If we fall,
Is there no pardon for our feebleness?

(*Hernandez, without speaking, holds up a Cross before him.*)

Abdullah. Speak!

Gonzalez (*snatching the Cross, and lifting it up.*)
Let the earth be shaken through its depths,
But *this* must triumph!

Abdullah (*coldly.*) Be it as thou wilt.
—Unsheath the scimetar! [*To his Guards.*

Garcias (*to Gonzalez.*) Away, my chief!
This is your place no longer. There are things
No human heart, though battle-proof as yours,
Unmadden'd may sustain.

Gonzalez. Be still! I have now
No place on earth but this!

Alphonso (*from beneath.*) Men! give me way,
That I may speak forth once before I die!

Garcias. The princely boy!—How gallantly his brow
Wears its high nature in the face of death!

Alphonso. Father!

Gonzalez. My son! my son!—mine eldest-born!
Alphonso. Stay but upon the ramparts!—Fear thou not—
There is good courage in me: oh! my father!
I will not shame thee!—only let me fall
Knowing thine eye looks proudly on thy child,
So shall my heart have strength.
Gonzalez. Would, would to God,
That I might die for thee, my noble boy!
Alphonso, my fair son!
Alphonso. Could I have lived,
I might have been a warrior!—Now, farewell!
But look upon me still!—I will not blench
When the keen sabre flashes.—Mark me well!
Mine eyelid shall not quiver as it falls,
So thou wilt look upon me!
Garcias (*to Gonzalez.*) Nay, my lord!
We must be gone!—thou *canst* not bear it!
Gonzalez. Peace!
—Who hath told *thee* how much man's heart can bear?
—Lend me thine arm—my brain whirls fearfully—
How thick the shades close round!—my boy! my boy!
Where art thou in this gloom?
Garcias. Let us go hence.
This is a dreadful moment!
Gonzalez. Hush!—what saidst thou?
Now let me look on him!—Dost *thou* see aught
Through the dull mist that wraps us?
Garcias. I behold—
Oh! for a thousand Spaniards to rush down—
Gonzalez. Thou seest—My heart stands still to hear thee speak!

—There seems a fearful hush upon the air,
As 'twere the dead of night!

Garcias. The hosts have closed
Around the spot in stillness. Through the spears,
Ranged thick and motionless, I see him not;
—But now——

Gonzalez. He bade me keep mine eye upon him,
And all is darkness round me!—Now?

Garcias. A sword,
A sword, springs upward, like a lightning burst,
Through the dark serried mass!—Its cold blue glare
Is wavering to and fro—'tis vanish'd—hark!

Gonzalez. I heard it, yes!—I heard the dull dead sound,
That heavily broke the silence!—Didst thou speak?
—I lost thy words—come nearer!

Garcias. 'Twas—'tis past!—
The sword fell *then!*

Hernandez (*with exultation.*) Flow forth, thou noble blood!
Fount of Spain's ransom and deliverance, flow
Uncheck'd and brightly forth!—Thou kingly stream!
Blood of our heroes! blood of martyrdom!
Which through so many warrior-hearts hast pour'd
Thy fiery currents, and hast made our hills
Free, by thine own free offering!—Bathe the land!
But there thou shalt not sink!—Our very air
Shall take thy colouring, and our loaded skies,
O'er th' infidel hang dark and ominous,
With battle-hues of thee!—And thy deep voice
Rising above them to the judgment-seat

Shall call a burst of gather'd vengeance down,
To sweep th' oppressor from us!—For thy wave
Hath made his guilt run o'er!

Gonzalez (*endeavouring to rouse himself.*) 'Tis all a dream!
There is not one—no hand on earth could harm
That fair boy's graceful head!—Why look you thus!

Abdullah (*pointing to Carlos.*) Christian! e'en yet thou hast a son!

Gonzalez. E'en yet!

Carlos. My father! take me from these fearful men!
Wilt thou not save me, father?

Gonzalez (*attempting to unsheath his sword.*) Is the strength
From mine arm shiver'd? Garcias, follow me!

Garcias. Whither, my chief?

Gonzalez. Why, we can die as well
On yonder plain,—ay, a spear's thrust will do
The little that our misery doth require,
Sooner than e'er this anguish! Life is best
Thrown from us in such moments.

[*Voices heard at a distance.*

Hernandez. Hush! what strain
Floats on the wind?

Garcias. 'Tis the Cid's battle-song!
What marvel hath been wrought?

[*Voices approaching heard in chorus.*

The Moor is on his way!
With the tambour peal and the tecbir-shout,
And the horn o'er the blue seas ringing out,
He hath marshall'd his dark array!

XIMENA *enters, followed by* CITIZENS, *with the Banner.*

Ximena. Is it too late?—My father, these are men
Through life and death prepared to follow thee
Beneath this banner!—Is their zeal too late?
—Oh! there's a fearful history on thy brow!
What hast thou seen?

Garcias. It is not *all* too late.

Ximena. My brothers!

Hernandez. All is well.
(*To* GARCIAS.) Hush! would'st thou chill
That which hath sprung within them, as a flame
From th' altar-embers mounts in sudden brightness?
I say, 'tis not too late, ye men of Spain!
On to the rescue!

Ximena. Bless me, oh, my father!
And I will hence, to aid thee with my prayers,
Sending my spirit with thee through the storm,
Lit up by flashing swords!

Gonzalez (*falling on her neck.*) Hath aught been spared?
Am I not all bereft?—Thou'rt left me still!
Mine own, my loveliest one, thou'rt left me still!
Farewell!—thy father's blessing, and thy God's,
Be with thee, my Ximena.

Ximena. Fare thee well!
If, ere thy steps turn homeward from the field,
The voice is hush'd that still hath welcomed thee,
Think of me in thy victory!

Hernandez. Peace! no more!
This is no time to melt our nature down

To a soft stream of tears.—Be of strong heart!
Give me the banner! Swell the song again!

THE CITIZENS.

Ere night, must swords be red!
It is not an hour for knells and tears,
But for helmets braced and serried spears!
To-morrow for the dead! [*Exeunt omnes.*

Scene—Before the Altar of a Church.

ELMINA *rises from the steps of the Altar.*

Elmina. The clouds are fearful that o'erhang thy ways,
Oh, thou mysterious Heaven!—It cannot be
That I have drawn the vials of thy wrath,
To burst upon me through the lifting up
Of a proud heart, elate in happiness!
No! in my day's full noon, for me life's flowers
But wreathed a cup of trembling; and the love
The boundless love, my spirit was form'd to bear,
Hath ever, in its place of silence, been
A trouble and a shadow, tinging thought
With hues too deep for joy!—I never look'd
On my fair children, in their buoyant mirth,
Or sunny sleep, when all the gentle air
Seem'd glowing with their quiet blessedness,
But o'er my soul there came a shuddering sense
Of earth, and its pale changes; even like that
Which vaguely mingles with our glorious dreams
A restless and disturbing consciousness
That the bright things must fade!—How have I shrunk

From the dull murmur of th' unquiet voice,
With its low tokens of mortality,
Till my heart fainted 'midst their smiles!—their smiles!
—Where are those glad looks now?—Could they go down
With all their joyous light, that seem'd not earth's,
To the cold grave?—My children!—Righteous Heaven!
There floats a dark remembrance o'er my brain
Of one who told me, with relentless eye,
That *this* should be the hour!

XIMENA *enters.*

Ximena. They are gone forth
Unto the rescue—strong in heart and hope,
Faithful, though few!—My mother, let thy prayers
Call on the land's good saints to lift once more
The sword and cross that sweep the field for Spain,
As in old battle; so thine arms e'en yet
May clasp thy sons!—For me, my part is done!
The flame, which dimly might have linger'd yet
A little while, hath gather'd all its rays
Brightly to sink at once! and it is well!
The shadows are around me; to thy heart
Fold me, that I may die.

Elmina. My child!—What dream
Is on thy soul?—E'en now thine aspect wears
Life's brightest inspiration!

Ximena. Death's!

Elmina. Away!
Thine eye hath starry clearness, and thy cheek
Doth glow beneath it with a richer hue
Than ting'd its earlier flower!

Ximena. It well may be!
There are far deeper and far warmer hues
Than those which draw their colouring from the founts
Of youth, or health, or hope.

Elmina. Nay, speak not thus:
There's that about thee shining which would send
E'en through *my* heart a sunny glow of joy,
Wer't not for these sad words. The dim cold air
And solemn light, which wrap these tombs and shrines
As a pale gleaming shroud, seem kindled up
With a young spirit of ethereal hope
Caught from thy mien!—Oh no! this is not death!

Ximena. Why should not He, whose touch dissolves our chain,
Put on his robes of beauty when he comes
As a deliverer?—He hath many forms,
They should not all be fearful!—If his call
Be but our gathering to that distant land
For whose sweet waters we have pined with thirst,
Why should not its prophetic sense be borne
Into the heart's deep stillness, with a breath
Of summer-winds, a voice of melody,
Solemn, yet lovely?—Mother! I depart!
—Be it thy comfort, in the after-days,
That thou hast seen me thus!

Elmina. Distract me not
With such wild fears! Can I bear on with life
When thou art gone?—Thy voice, thy step, thy smile,
Pass'd from my path?—Alas! even now thine eye
Is changed—thy cheek is fading!

Ximena. Ay, the clouds
Of the dim hour are gathering o'er my sight,

And yet I fear not, for the God of Help
Comes in that quiet darkness!—It may soothe
Thy woes, my mother, if I tell thee now,
With what glad calmness I behold the veil
Falling between me and the world, wherein
My heart so ill hath rested.

Elmina. Thine!

Ximena. Rejoice
For her, that, when the garland of her life
Was blighted, and the springs of hope were dried,
Received her summons hence; and had no time,
Bearing the canker at th' impatient heart,
To wither, sorrowing for that gift of Heaven,
Which lent one moment of existence light,
That dimm'd the rest for ever!

Elmina. How is this?
My child, what mean'st thou?

Ximena. Mother, I have loved,
And been beloved!—the sunbeam of an hour,
Which gave life's hidden treasures to mine eye,
As they lay shining in their secret founts,
Went out, and left them colourless.—'T is past—
And what remains on earth?—the rainbow mist,
Through which I gazed, hath melted, and my sight
Is clear'd to look on all things as they are!
—But this is far too mournful!—Life's dark gift
Hath fallen too early and too cold upon me!
—Therefore I would go hence!

Elmina. And thou hast loved
Unknown——

Ximena. Oh! pardon, pardon that I veil'd
My thoughts from thee!—But thou hadst woes enough,

And mine came o'er me when thy soul had need
Of more than mortal strength! — For I had scarce
Given the deep consciousness that I was loved
A treasure's place within my secret heart,
When earth's brief joy went from me!
'Twas at morn
I saw the warriors to their field go forth,
And he — my chosen — was there amongst the rest,
With his young, glorious brow! — I look'd again —
The strife grew dark beneath me — but his plume
Waved free above the lances. — Yet again —
It had gone down! and steeds were trampling o'er
The spot to which mine eyes were riveted
Till blinded by th' intenseness of their gaze!
— And then — at last — I hurried to the gate,
And met him there! — I met him! — on his shield,
And with his cloven helm, and shiver'd sword,
And dark hair steep'd in blood! — They bore him
past —
Mother! I saw his face! — Oh! such a death
Works fearful changes on the fair of earth,
The pride of woman's eye!

Elmina. Sweet daughter, peace!
Wake not the dark remembrance; for thy frame—

Ximena. There *will* be peace ere long. I shut
my heart
E'en as a tomb, o'er that lone silent grief,
That I might spare it thee! — But now the hour
Is come when that which would have pierced thy soul
Shall be its healing balm. Oh! weep thou not,
Save with a gentle sorrow!

Elmina. Must it be?
Art thou indeed to leave me?

Ximena (*exultingly.*) Be thou glad!
I say, rejoice above thy favour'd child!
Joy for the soldier, when his field is fought;
Joy for the peasant, when his vintage-task
Is closed at eve!—But most of all for her,
Who, when her life changed its glittering robes
For the dull garb of sorrow, which doth cling
So heavily around the journeyers on,
Cast down its weight—and slept!
Elmina. Alas! thine eye
Is wandering—yet how brightly!—Is this death,
Or some high wondrous vision?—Speak, my child!
How is it with thee now?
Ximena (*wildly.*) I see it still!
'Tis floating, like a glorious cloud on high,
My father's banner!—Hear'st thou not a sound?
The trumpet of Castile?—Praise, praise to Heaven!
—Now may the weary rest!—Be still!—Who calls
The night so fearful?—— [*She dies.*
Elmina. No! she is not dead!
—Ximena! speak to me!—Oh! yet a tone
From that sweet voice, that I may gather in
One more remembrance of its lovely sound
Ere the deep silence fall!—What! is all hush'd?
—No, no!—it cannot be!—How should we bear
The dark misgivings of our souls, if Heaven
Left not such beings with us?—But is this
Her wonted look?—too sad a quiet lies
On its dim fearful beauty!—Speak, Ximena!
Speak!—my heart dies within me!—She is gone,
With all her blessed smiles!—My child! my child!
Where art thou?—Where is that which answer'd me,
From thy soft-shining eyes!—Hush! doth she move?

—One light lock seem'd to tremble on her brow,
As a pulse throbb'd beneath;—'twas but the voice
Of my despair that stirr'd it!—She is gone!

[*She throws herself on the body. Gonzalez enters alone, and wounded.*

Elmina (*rising as he approaches.*) I must not *now* be scorn'd!—No, not a look,
A whisper of reproach!—Behold my woe!
Thou canst not scorn me now!

Gonzalez. Hast thou heard *all?*

Elmina. Thy daughter on my bosom laid her head,
And pass'd away to rest.—Behold her there,
Even such as death hath made her! (8)

Gonzalez (*bending over Ximena's body.*) Thou art gone
A little while before me, oh, my child!
Why should the traveller weep to part with those
That scarce an hour will reach their promised land
Ere he too cast his pilgrim staff away,
And spread his couch beside them?

Elmina. Must it be
Henceforth enough that *once* a thing so fair
Had its bright place among us?—Is this all,
Left for the years to come?—We will not stay!
Earth's chain each hour grows weaker.

Gonzalez (*still gazing upon Ximena.*) And thou'rt laid
To slumber in the shadow, blessed child!
Of a yet stainless altar, and beside
A sainted warrior's tomb!—Oh, fitting place
For thee to yield thy pure heroic soul
Back unto him that gave it!—And thy cheek
Yet smiles in its bright paleness!

Elmina. Hadst thou seen
The look with which she pass'd!
Gonzalez (*still bending over her.*) Why, 'tis almost
Like joy to view thy beautiful repose!
The faded image of that perfect calm
Floats, e'en as long-forgotten music, back
Into my weary heart!—No dark wild spot
On *thy* clear brow doth tell of bloody hands
That quench'd young life by violence!—We have seen
Too much of horror, in one crowded hour,
To weep for aught, so gently gather'd hence!
—Oh! *man* leaves other traces!
Elmina (*starting suddenly.*) It returns
On my bewilder'd soul!—Went ye not forth
Unto the rescue?—And thou 'rt here alone!
—Where are my sons?
Gonzalez (*solemnly.*) We were too late!
Elmina. Too late!
Hast thou naught else to tell me?
Gonzalez. I brought back
From that last field the banner of my sires,
And my own death-wound.
Elmina. Thine!
Gonzalez. Another hour
Shall hush its throbs for ever. I go hence,
And with me——
Elmina. No!—Man *could* not lift his hands—
Where hast thou left thy sons?
Gonzalez. I *have* no sons.
Elmina. What hast thou said?
Gonzalez. That now there lives not one
To wear the glory of mine ancient house,
When I am gone to rest.

Elmina (*throwing herself on the ground, and speaking in a low hurried voice.*) In one brief hour, all gone!—and such a death!
—I see their blood gush forth!—their graceful heads——
Take the dark vision from me, oh my God!
And such a death for *them!*—I was not there!—
They were but mine in beauty and in joy,
Not in that mortal anguish!—Ah, all gone!
—Why should I struggle more?—What *is* this Power
Against whose might, on all sides pressing us,
We strive with fierce impatience, which but lays
Our own frail spirit prostrate?
(*After a long pause.*) Now I know
Thy hand, my God!—and they are soonest crush'd
That most withstand it!—I resist no more
(*She rises.*)—A light, a light springs up from grief and death
Which with its solemn radiance doth reveal
Why we have thus been tried!
Gonzalez. Then I may still
Fix my last look on thee, in holy love,
Parting, but yet with hope.
Elmina (*falling at his feet.*) Canst thou forgive?
—Oh, I have driven the arrow to thy heart,
That should have buried it within mine own,
And borne the pang in silence!—I have cast
Thy life's fair honour, in my wild despair,
As an unvalued gem upon the waves,
Whence thou hast snatch'd it back, to bear from earth,
All stainless, on thy breast—Well hast thou done—
But I—canst thou forgive?
Gonzalez. Within this hour

I have stood upon that verge whence mortals fall,
And learn'd how 'tis with one whose sight grows dim,
And whose foot trembles on the gulf's dark side.
— Death purifies all feeling — We will part
In pity and in love.

Elmina. Death! — And thou too
Art on thy way! — Oh, joy for thee, high heart!
Glory and joy for thee! — The day is closed,
And well and nobly hast thou borne thyself
Through its long battle-toils, though many swords
Have enter'd thine own soul! — But on my head
Recoil the fierce invokings of despair,
And I am left far distanced in the race,
The lonely one of earth! — Ay, this is just:
I am not worthy that upon my breast
In this, thine hour of victory, thou shouldst yield
Thy spirit unto God.

Gonzalez. Thou art! thou art!
Oh! a life's love, a heart's long faithfulness,
E'en in the presence of eternal things
Wearing their chasten'd beauty all undimm'd,
Assert their lofty claims; and these are not
For one dark hour to cancel! — We are here
Before that altar which received the vows
Of our unbroken youth, and meet it is
For such a witness in the sight of Heaven,
And in the face of death, whose shadowy arm
Comes dim between us, to regard th' exchange
Of our tried hearts' forgiveness — who are they,
That in one path have journey'd, needing not
Forgiveness at its close?

(*A Citizen enters hastily.*)

Citizen. The Moors! the Moors!

Gonzalez. How! is the city storm'd?
Oh! righteous Heaven!—for this I look'd not yet!
Hath all been done in vain?—Why, then 't is time
For prayer, and then to rest!

Citizen. The sun shall set,
And not a Christian voice be left for prayer,
To-night, within Valencia!—round our walls
The paynim host is gathering for th' assault,
And we have none to guard them.

Gonzalez. Then my place
Is here no longer.—I had hoped to die
Ev'n by the altar and the sepulchre
Of my brave sires—but this was not to be!
Give me my sword again, and lead me hence
Back to the ramparts. I have yet an hour,
And it hath still high duties.—Now my wife!
Thou mother of my children—of the dead—
Whom I name unto thee, in steadfast hope—
Farewell!

Elmina. No, *not* farewell!—My soul hath risen
To mate itself with thine; and by thy side,
Amidst the hurtling lances, I will stand,
As one to whom a brave man's love hath been
Wasted not utterly.

Gonzalez. I thank thee, Heaven,
That I have tasted of the awful joy
Which thou hast given to temper hours like this,
With a deep sense of thee, and of thine ends
In these dread visitings!
(*To* Elmina.) We will not part,
But with the spirit's parting!

Elmina. One farewell
To her, that, mantled with sad loveliness,

Doth slumber at our feet!—My blessed child!
Oh! in thy heart's affliction thou wert strong,
And holy courage did pervade thy woe,
As light the troubled waters!—Be at peace!
Thou whose bright spirit made itself the soul
Of all that were around thee!—And thy life
E'en then was struck, and withering at the core!
—Farewell!—Thy parting look hath on me fall'n,
E'en as a gleam of heaven, and I am now
More like what thou hast been!—My soul is hush'd,
For a still sense of purer worlds hath sunk
And settled on its depths with that last smile
Which from thine shone forth.—Thou hast not lived
In vain—my child, farewell!

Gonzalez. Surely for thee
Death had no sting, Ximena!—We are blest,
To learn one secret of the shadowy past,
From such an aspect's calmness. Yet once more
I kiss thy pale young cheek, my broken flower!
In token of th' undying love and hope,
Whose land is far away. [*Exeunt.*

Scene—The Walls of the City.

HERNANDEZ.—*A few Citizens gathered round him.*

Hernandez. Why, men have cast the treasures, which their lives
Had been worn down in gathering, on the pyre,
Ay, at their household hearths have lit the brand,
Ev'n from that shrine of quiet love to bear
The flame which gave their temples and their homes,

In ashes, to the winds!—They have done this,
Making a blasted void, where once the sun
Look'd upon lovely dwellings; and from earth
Razing all record that on such a spot
Childhood hath sprung, age faded, misery wept,
And frail Humanity knelt before her God;
—They have done *this*, in their free nobleness,
Rather than see the spoiler's tread pollute
Their holy places!—Praise, high praise be theirs,
Who have left man such lessons!—And these things,
Made your own hills their witnesses!—The sky,
Whose arch bends o'er you, and the seas, wherein
Your rivers pour their gold, rejoicing saw
The altar, and the birth-place, and the tomb,
And all memorials of man's heart and faith,
Thus proudly honour'd.—Be ye not outdone
By the departed!—Though the godless foe
Be close upon us, we have power to snatch
The spoils of victory from him. Be but strong!
A few bright torches and brief moments yet
Shall baffle his flush'd hope, and we may die
Laughing him unto scorn.—Rise, follow me,
And thou, Valencia! triumph in thy fate,
The ruin, not the yoke, and make thy towers
A beacon unto Spain!

Citizen. We'll follow thee!
—Alas! for our fair city, and the homes
Wherein we rear'd our children!—But away!
The Moor shall plant no crescent o'er our fanes!

Voice (*from a tower on the walls.*) Succours!—
Castile! Castile!

Citizens (*rushing to the spot.*) It is even so!
Now blessing be to Heaven, for we are saved!
Castile, Castile!

Voice (*from the tower.*) Line after line of spears,
Lance after lance, upon the horizon's verge,
Like festal lights from cities bursting up,
Doth skirt the plains!—in faith, a noble host!

Another Voice. The Moor hath turn'd him from our walls, to front
Th' advancing might of Spain!

Citizens (*shouting.*) Castile! Castile!

(GONZALEZ *enters, supported by* ELMINA *and a Citizen.*

Gonzalez. What shouts of joy are these?

Hernandez. Hail, chieftain! hail!
Thus ev'n in death 'tis given thee to receive
The conqueror's crown!—Behold our God hath heard
And arm'd himself with vengeance!—Lo! they come!
The lances of Castile!

Gonzalez. I knew, I knew
Thou wouldst not utterly, my God, forsake
Thy servant in his need!—My blood and tears
Have not sunk vainly to th' attesting earth!
Praise to thee, thanks and praise, that I have lived
To see this hour!

Elmina. And I too bless thy name,
Though thou hast proved me unto agony!
Oh God!—thou God of chastening!

Voice (*from the tower.*) They move on!
I see the royal banner in the air,
With its emblazon'd towers!

Gonzalez. Go, bring ye forth
The banner of the Cid, and plant it here,
To stream above me for an answering sign
That the good cross doth hold its lofty place
Within Valencia still!—What see ye now?

Hernandez. I see a kingdom's might upon its path,
Moving in terrible magnificence,
Unto revenge and victory!—With the flash
Of knightly swords, up-springing from the ranks,
As meteors from a still and gloomy deep,
And with the waving of ten thousand plumes,
Like a land's harvest in the autumn wind,
And with fierce light, which is not of the sun,
But flung from sheets of steel—it comes, it comes,
The vengeance of our God!

Gonzalez. I hear it now,
The heavy tread of mail-clad multitudes,
Like thunder-showers upon the forest paths.

Hernandez. Ay, earth knows well the omen of that sound,
And she hath echoes, like a sepulchre's,
Pent in her secret hollows, to respond
Unto the step of death!

Gonzalez. Hark! how the wind
Swells proudly with the battle-march of Spain!
Now the heart feels its power!—A little while
Grant me to live, my God!—What pause is this?

Hernandez. A deep and dreadful one!—the serried files
Level their spears for combat; now the hosts
Look on each other in their brooding wrath,
Silent, and face to face.

VOICES HEARD WITHOUT, CHANTING.

Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit! rest thee now!
E'en while with ours thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
Soul, to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die.

Elmina (*to* GONZALEZ.) It is the death-hymn o'er thy daughter's bier!
—But I am calm, and e'en like gentle winds,
That music, through the stillness of my heart,
Sends mournful peace.

Gonzalez. Oh! well those solemn tunes
Accord with such an hour, for all her life
Breathed of a hero's soul!

[*A sound of trumpets and shouting from the plain.*

Hernandez. Now, now they close!—Hark! what a dull dead sound
Is in the Moorish war-shout!—I have known
Such tones prophetic oft.—The shock is given—
Lo! they have placed their shields before their hearts,
And lower'd their lances with the streamers on,
And on their steeds bent forward!—God for Spain!
The first bright sparks of battle have been struck
From spear to spear, across the gleaming field!
—There is no sight on which the blue sky looks
To match with this!—'Tis not the gallant crests,
Nor banners with their glorious blazonry;
The very nature and high soul of man
Doth now reveal itself!

Gonzalez. Oh, raise me up,
That I may look upon the noble scene!
—It will not be!—That this dull mist would pass
A moment from my sight!—Whence rose that shout, in fierce triumph?

Hernandez (*clasping his hands.*) Must I look on this?
The banner sinks—'t is taken!
Gonzalez. Whose?
Hernandez. Castile's!
Gonzalez. Oh, God of battles!
Elmina. Calm thy noble heart!
Thou wilt not pass away without thy meed.
Nay, rest thee on my bosom.
Hernandez. Cheer thee yet!
Our knights have spurr'd to rescue.—There is now
A whirl, a mingling of all terrible things,
Yet more appalling than the fierce distinctness
Wherewith they moved before!—I see tall plumes
All wildly tossing o'er the battle's tide,
Sway'd by the wrathful motion, and the press
Of desperate men, as cedar-boughs by storms.
Many a white streamer there is dyed with blood,
Many a false corslet broken, many a shield
Pierced through!—Now, shout for Santiago, shout!
Lo! javelins with a moment's brightness cleave
The thickening dust, and barbed steeds go down
With their helm'd riders!—Who, but One, can tell
How spirits part amidst that fearful rush
And trampling on of furious multitudes?
Gonzalez. Thou'rt silent!—See'st thou more?—
My soul grows dark.
Hernandez. And dark and troubled, as an angry sea,
Dashing some gallant armament in scorn
Against its rocks, is all on which I gaze!
—I can but tell thee how tall spears are cross'd,
And lances seem to shiver, and proud helms
To lighten with the stroke!—But round the spot,

Where, like a storm-fell'd mast, our standard sank,
The heart of battle burns.

Gonzalez. Where is that spot?

Hernandez. It is beneath the lonely tuft of palms,
That lift their green heads o'er the tumult still,
In calm and stately grace.

Gonzalez. *There,* didst thou say?
Then God is with us, and we *must* prevail!
For on that spot they died!—My children's blood
Calls on the avenger thence!

Elmina. They perish'd there!
—And the bright locks that waved so joyously
To the free winds, lay trampled and defiled
Ev'n on that place of death!—Oh, Merciful!
Hush the dark thought within me!

Hernandez (*with sudden exultation.*) Who is he,
On the white steed, and with the castled helm,
And the gold broider'd mantle, which doth float
E'en like a sunny cloud above the fight;
And the pale cross, which from his breast-plate gleams
With star-like radiance?

Gonzalez (*eagerly.*) Didst thou say the cross?

Hernandez. On his mail'd bosom shines a broad white cross,
And his long plumage through the darkening air
Streams like a snow-wreath.

Gonzalez. That should be—

Hernandez. The king!
—Was it not told us how he sent, of late,
To the Cid's tomb, e'en for the silver cross
Which he who slumbers there was wont to bind
O'er his brave heart in fight? (9)

Gonzalez (*springing up joyfully.*) My king! my king!

Now all good saints for Spain!—My noble king!
And thou art there!—That I might look once more
Upon thy face!—But yet I thank thee, Heaven!
That thou hast sent him, from my dying hands
Thus to receive his city!

[*He sinks back into* Elmina's *arms.*

Hernandez. He hath clear'd
A pathway 'midst the combat, and the light
Follows his charge through yon close living mass
E'en as the gleam on some proud vessel's wake
Along the stormy waters!—'Tis redeem'd—
The castled banner!—It is flung once more,
In joy and glory, to the sweeping winds!
—There seems a wavering through the paynim hosts—
Castile doth press them sore—Now, now rejoice!

Gonzalez. What hast thou seen?

Hernandez. Abdullah falls! He falls!
The man of blood!—the spoiler!—he hath sunk
In our king's path!—Well hath that royal sword
Avenged thy cause, Gonzalez.
They give way,
The Crescent's van is broken!—On the hills
And the dark pine-woods may the infidel
Call vainly in his agony of fear,
To cover him from vengeance!—Lo! they fly!
They of the forest and the wilderness
Are scatter'd e'en as leaves upon the wind!
Woe to the sons of Afric!—Let the plains,
And the vine-mountains, and Hesperian seas,
Take their dead unto them!—that blood shall wash
Our soil from stains of bondage.

Gonzalez (*attempting to raise himself.*) Set me free

Come with me forth, for I must greet my king,
After his battle-field!
Hernandez. Oh, blest in death!
Chosen of Heaven, farewell!—Look on the Cross,
And part from earth in peace!
Gonzalez. Now charge once more!
God is with Spain, and Santiago's sword
Is reddening all the air!—Shout forth 'Castile!'
The day is ours!—I go!—but fear ye not!
For Afric's lance is broken, and my sons
Have won their first good field! [*He dies.*
Elmina. Look on me yet!
Speak one farewell, my husband!—must thy voice
Enter my soul no more?—Thine eye is fix'd—
Now is my life uprooted,—and 't is well.

(*A Sound of triumphant music is heard, and many Castilian Knights and Soldiers enter.*)

A Citizen. Hush your triumphal sounds, although ye come
E'en as deliverers!—But the noble dead,
And those that mourn them, claim from human hearts
Deep silent reverence.
Elmina (*rising proudly.*) No: swell forth, Castile!
Thy trumpet-music, till the seas and heavens,
And the deep hills, give every stormy note
Echoes to ring through Spain!—How, know ye not
That all array'd for triumph, crown'd and robed
With the strong spirit which hath saved the land,
Ev'n now a conqueror to his rest is gone?
—Fear not to break that sleep, but let the wind
Swell on with victory's shout?—*He* will not hear—
Hath earth a sound more sad?

Hernandez. Lift ye the dead,
And bear him, with the banner of his race
Waving above him proudly, as it waved
O'er the Cid's battles, to the tomb, wherein
His warrior-sires are gather'd. [*They raise the body.*

Elmina. Ay, 't is thus
Thou shouldst be honour'd! — And I follow thee
With an unfaltering and a lofty step,
To the last home of glory. She that wears
In her deep heart the memory of thy love
Shall thence draw strength for all things, till the God
Whose hand around her hath unpeopled earth,
Looking upon her still and chasten'd soul,
Call it once more to thine!

(*To the Castilians.*)
Awake, I say,
Tambour and trumpet, wake! — and let the land
Through all her mountains hear your funeral peal
— So should a hero pass to his repose.

[*Exeunt omnes*

NOTES.

Note 1.

Mountain Christians, those natives of Spain, who, under their prince, Pelayo, took refuge among the mountains of the northern provinces, where they maintained their religion and liberty, while the rest of their country was overrun by the Moors.

Note 2.

Oh, free doth sorrow pass, &c.

Frey geht das Unglück durch die ganze Erde.
Schiller's Death of Wallenstein, Act iv. sc. 2.

Note 3.

Tizona, the fire-brand. The name of the Cid's favourite sword, taken in battle from the Moorish king Bucar.

Note 4.

How he won Valencia from the Moor, &c.

Valencia, which has been repeatedly besieged, and taken by the armies of different nations, remained in the possession of the Moors for an hundred and seventy years after the Cid's death. It was regained from them by King Don Jayme, of Aragon, surnamed the Conqueror; after whose success I have ventured to suppose it governed by a descendant of the Campeador.

Note 5.

It was a Spanish tradition, that the great bell of the Cathedral of Saragossa always tolled spontaneously before a king of Spain died.

Note 6.

"El que en buen hora nasco;" he that was born in happy hour. An appellation given to the Cid in the ancient chronicles.

Note 7.

For this, and the subsequent allusion to Spanish legends, see *The Romances and Chronicles of the Cid.*

Note 8.

"La voilà, telle que la mort nous l'a faite!" — *Bossuet, Oraisons Funèbres.*

Note 9.

This circumstance is recorded of King Don Alphonso, the last of that name. He sent to the Cid's tomb for the cross which that warrior was accustomed to wear upon his breast when he went to battle, and had it made into one for himself; "because of the faith which he had, that through it he should obtain the victory." *Southey's Chronicle of the Cid.*

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